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new MUSICAL EXPRESS

ALBUMS A GO-GO

BOWIE DYLAN
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WAILERS 5 CONCERTS?

PAGE 3

British Music Fest: but where was the Great?

PAGES 24/26

Pic: JOE STEVENS

News Desk

Edited: Derek Johnson

Andy F-Low on the road

ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW, who is currently placed high in the NME Chart with his A & M single "Wide Eyed And Legless", is to headline a British tour next month together with his backing band.

So far 14 dates have been confirmed, and there is a possibility of more being slotted into his schedule. Support act on many of the gigs will be Starry Eyed & Laughing. The itinerary, climaxing in a major London concert, comprises:

Leamington Spa Centre (February 3), Keele University (4), Bradford University (6), Sheffield University (7), Hemel Hempstead Pavilion (8), Hull College of Commerce (13), Leicester Polytechnic (14), Liverpool Royal Court Theatre (15), York University (20), Worcester College (21), Croydon Fairfield Hall (22), Stoke Alsager College (25), Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (27), Weymouth Pavilion (28) and London Victoria Palace (29). Andy is expected to make his U.S. debut in March, by way of a coast-to-coast tour.

COHEN TOUR

THE ITINERARY for Leonard Cohen's British concert tour in May, plans for which were revealed by NME in November, has now been finalised. He visits Leicester De Montfort Hall (May 13), Sheffield City Hall (14), Glasgow Apollo Centre (15), Edinburgh Usher Hall (16), Newcastle City Hall (17), Southport New Theatre (18), Manchester Free Trade Hall (19), Birmingham Town Hall (20), Oxford New Theatre (22), Portsmouth Guildhall (23), Bristol Colston Hall (24) and London Royal Albert Hall (25). A new Cohen album will be issued in April. It will be his first British visit for 15 months.

JASPER CARROTT'S BIG CONCERT TOUR

JASPER CARROTT, the folk singer of "Funky Moped" fame, undertakes his first-ever full concert tour in the spring. He visits Plymouth Fiesta (May 12), Cheltenham Town Hall (13), Crewe Theatre (14), Liverpool St. George's Hall (15), Nottingham Playhouse (16), Corby Festival Hall (19), Leamington Avon Hall (20), Bolton Albert Hall (21), London Victoria Palace (23), Buxton Playhouse (25), Middlesbrough Town Hall (26), Barnsley Civic Theatre (27), Shrewsbury Music Hall (28), Bristol Colston Hall (29), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (30) and Birmingham Repertory Theatre (June 4). As already reported, he plays three isolated concerts this month — at Manchester Middleton Civic Hall (this Sunday), Cheltenham Town Hall (January 15) and London Palladium (18).

Miracles coming

THE MIRACLES are coming to Britain in the early spring, and will support Johnny Mathis on his previously-reported concert tour here. The group are one of the longest-standing Tamla Motown acts and — following the departure of Smokey Robinson some three years ago — their line-up now consists of Ronnie White, Warren Peter Moore, Bobby Rogers and Bill Griffien. They will be bringing their own nine-piece support band for the tour. Dates are Coventry Theatre (March 21), Bristol Colston Hall (23), Southport New Theatre (24-26), Glasgow Apollo (27), London Palladium (28 and April 4) and Bournemouth Winter Gardens (6). They will also be appearing on TV.

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STYLISTICS DATES SET

DATES AND VENUES have now been confirmed for the early spring British concert tour by the Stylistics, promoted by Jeffrey Kruger's Ember Concert Division in conjunction with Kennedy Street Enterprises. Their itinerary includes two days at the famed London Palladium, with the possibility of a third night at the same venue.

As previously reported, the Stylistics open their British visit with a week at Batley Variety Club starting on March 29. The following concerts have now been finalised: Leicester De Montfort Hall (April 4), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (7), Croydon Fairfield Hall (8), London Palladium (9 and 10), Glasgow Apollo Centre (14), Southport New Theatre (15), Manchester Free Trade Hall (17) and Wolverhampton Civic Hall (18).

If the third London concert materialises, it will take place on April 11. The group will also be appearing on BBC-1's "Top Of The Pops" on April 8, when they will feature their new single which is being released to tie in with their visit. And negotiations are under way for them to star in their own BBC-TV special.

As reported last week, the Stylistics were the most consistent U.S. act in the NME charts throughout 1975. Their elpee "The Best Of The Stylistics" failed by just one point to become the top album of the year in the NME Points Championship — and they came third in the Singles Table, beaten only by Mud and the Bay City Rollers.

Abe Tilmon & Emeralds date sheet

DATES AND VENUES have now been confirmed for the February-March British tour by Abe Tilmon and the Detroit Emeralds. They visit Derby Bailey's (February 16 week), Watford Bailey's (22 week), Stoke Bailey's (29 week), Blackburn Cavendish (March 7 week, doubling Oldham Bailey's from March 8 onwards) and Bristol Bailey's (15 only).

As reported by NME four weeks ago, there will be two Detroit Emeralds groups touring Britain at the same time. The outfit fronted by Abe Tilmon (who was lead singer on the Emeralds' hit record "Feel the Need In Me") also includes Joe Anderson and Larry Rice. The other group is the one which has previously toured Britain as the Detroit Emeralds — although on this occasion they will be billed as James, Carl & Ivy.

T. Rex– 18 gigs

DATES AND VENUES have now been finalised for the winter tour by Marc Bolan and T. Rex, plans for which were revealed by NME two weeks ago. As previously reported, the tour — which includes several venues rarely used for rock — ties in with the January 30 release of the band's new album "Futuristic Dragon".

The itinerary comprises Chatham Central Hall (February 5), St. Alban's City Hall (6), Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall (7), Southend Cliffs Pavilion (8), Southport Floral Hall (12), Newark Palace (13), Withernsea Grand Pavilion (14), Sunderland Empire (15), London Strand Lyceum (18), Dunstable Queensway Hall (19), Birmingham Town Hall (23), Manchester Free Trade Hall (24), New Brighton Pavilion (28), Falkirk Municipal Hall (March 3), Motherwell Concert Hall (4), Dunfermline Carnegie Theatre (5), Kilmarnock Grand Hall (6), and Dundee Caird Hall (7).

COWBELL LAUNCH SEVEN BIG TOURS

COWBELL, the agency formed by Kenny Bell and Richard Cowley last month as an offshoot from the Chrysalis Group, swings into action with seven major tours during the first two months of this year. The company's John Jackson told NME that the following acts will be going out on the road in the near future:

Be-Bop Deluxe, who tour Britain from January 22 to February 28. Full details of their itinerary were reported last week. But it has now been confirmed that Doctors Of Madness will be the support act on all gigs.

The Groundhogs, whose reunion was exclusively revealed by NME five weeks ago, open in late February and tour through March. It was learned this week that they will play a major London date at Chalk Farm Roundhouse on March 7, and other gigs will be announced in a week or two.

Jack The Lad, who headlined two tours in the autumn, will be going out again from January 30 through February. On this occasion they will be supported by Newcastle band Arbre, who recently signed with DJM Records.

Jess Roden Band undertake a nationwide tour from mid-February to mid-March, and their schedule will culminate in a major London show.

Kokomo are to headline a full British tour starting in February. This follows the success of their London concert at Drury Lane Theatre Royal in early December. Dates and venues are at present being finalised.

John Miles has just been signed for exclusive representation by Cowbell. His future plans are still being mapped out, but they will include a string of dates in the late winter.

Sailor are being lined up for an extensive concert tour starting in February. Details will follow shortly.

After last week's nude detail from the sleeve of the new Be-Bop Deluxe elpee, we now bring you the cover of the new BOXER album. So much for the Sex Discrimination Act! The label is Virgin, would you believe?

Boxer: LP, tour soon

BOXER, the band formed last autumn by Mike Patto (vocals) and Ollie Halsall (lead guitar and keyboards), have been signed to a long-term world-wide recording contract by Virgin. Their debut album and single, titled "Below The Belt" and "All The Time In The World" respectively, will both be issued on February 6. Boxer will be undertaking a major British tour to promote these releases, and dates will be announced shortly. Other members of the band are Keith Ellis (bass) and Tony Newman (drums).

Whitman's 31 venues

VETERAN country artist Slim Whitman headlines an extensive British concert tour in February and March, comprising over 30 major dates. Support act is another U.S. c-&-w act Nutt and the Drovers. A 20-track compilation album titled "The Very Best Of Slim Whitman" is released by United Artists on January 16 as a prelude to the tour, which is as follows:

CROYDON Fairfield Hall (February 5), EASTBOURNE Congress (6), SOUTHAMPTON Gaumont (7), NORWICH Theatre Royal (8), PETERBOROUGH ABC Theatre (12), IPSWICH Gaumont (13 and 14), NOTTINGHAM Theatre Royal (15), STOCKPORT Davenport (18), HULL ABC Theatre (19), SHEFFIELD City Hall (20), LIVERPOOL Empire (21), COVENTRY Theatre (22), GLOUCESTER Leisure Centre (26), TAUNTON Odeon (27), PLYMOUTH ABC Theatre (28) BRISTOL Colston Hall (29), NEWCASTLE City Hall (March 3), ABERDEEN Music Hall (4), DUNDEE Caird Hall (5), GLASGOW Apollo (6), EDINBURGH Usher Hall (7), CHELMSFORD Odeon (10), CHATHAM Centre Hall (11), BRIGHTON Dome (12), BOURNEMOUTH Winter Gardens (13), OXFORD New (14), WOLVERHAMPTON Civic Hall (16), SOUTHPORT Theatre (18), CHESTER ABC Theatre (19), HANLEY Gaumont (20), LONDON Palladium (21).

NEWS BRIEFS

● **THE CAJUN MOON** — Gay & Terry Woods — Andy Roberts folk package tour, details of which were reported by NME three weeks ago, has switched its London gig to the Commonwealth Institute on February 6. This replaces the Collegiate Theatre the previous day. A new date for the tour is at Manchester University on January 28, but the gig planned for Cambridge Union Theatre on January 29 is now cancelled.

● **DIANE SOLOMON** has been booked for a major London residency. She appears in cabaret at the Talk of The Town theatre-restaurant for two weeks from Monday, January 19.

● **RENAISSANCE** have added two more concerts to their January tour itinerary listed last week. They are Manchester University (January 22) and Guildford Civic Hall (25).

● **OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN** is to headline a major British concert tour in April, visiting most of the leading venues throughout the country. Details will be announced shortly.

● **ELKIE BROOKS** appears in concert at London Imperial College on January 17, and plays a week at London Ronnie Scott's Club from February 2. She will be supported by a band led by her husband Pete Gage, and including guitarist Isaac Guillory.

● **PAUL McCARTNEY** and Wings are spending the next two months in the recording studios, cutting material for a new album and single. A major European tour is planned for the early spring, followed by a visit to the United States, but no British dates are envisaged in the foreseeable future.

● **RINGO STARR** has a new single rushed out by EMI this Friday. It is "Oh My My" coupled with "No No Song", and both titles were originally featured on his album "Goodnight Vienna".

ROBIN TROWER

Trower, Purple & Stills –tours planned

ROBIN TROWER is to play half-a-dozen British concerts at the end of the next month. Among his confirmed dates are Newcastle City Hall (February 22) and Glasgow Apollo Centre (28). His schedule also includes a major London appearance which, at Press time, was still being finalised.

STEPHEN STILLS is in line for a British visit in the near future. The MAM Organisation this week confirmed that they are at present trying to tie up some concerts here for Stills in February or March.

DEEP PURPLE begin an extensive European tour in early March, and their itinerary will include series of major concerts in Britain. A spokesman said that precise details are not yet available, as it is still not certain whether their British gigs will precede or follow their dates on the Continent, but their schedule will be announced within the next few weeks. Meanwhile, Purple begin a 31-venue tour of the United States on January 14.

OSIBISA are to undertake a lengthy tour of Britain in the spring, and dates are at present being set up by the Bron Agency. The band leave this Friday for a long tour of Australasia, opening in Auckland next Monday. They play 13 gigs in New Zealand, 22 in Australia and a further two in Indonesia.

RALPH McTELL is likely to play a series of British concerts next month, his first for almost a year. Several dates have already been pencilled in form him, including Croydon Fairfield Hall (February 17) and Southampton Guildhall (March 14), but manager Bruce May stressed this week that no gigs have yet been confirmed.

THE RUBETTES will be touring Britain from the end of March through April, to coincide with the release of their new single. In the meantime, they leave on Saturday for Japan where they are to headline three weeks of concert dates.

News Desk

Edited: Derek Johnson

'Elvis to retire' – rumours are rife

1976 WILL BE the year of decision for Elvis Presley. Either he will venture outside the United States for the first time in his career, playing selected dates around the world, including Britain — or he will announce his retirement. And there is a distinct possibility that both of these alternatives could prove correct!

Rumours have been gaining strength in Los Angeles for some months, suggesting that Presley has — for health reasons — decided to retire in the near future. And these rumours have recently become more rampant, even to the extent of being printed as fact in some publications, cables our U.S. correspondent. One Los Angeles magazine front-paged its New Year's Day edition with the headline "Presley to quit in 76" — and at Press-time this had still not been denied officially.

However, Elvis may well be having second thoughts following his remarkable success on New Year's Eve, when he appeared in concert before his largest-ever audience at Pontiac in Michigan. He told reporters backstage that he is still planning overseas dates in 1976 — and, of course, he is already on record as saying that he will "do a show in England" this year.

But the unknown factor which could jeopardise these plans is Presley's health. Clearly he is a worried man — and it has just been leaked that, immediately prior to his pre-Christmas Las Vegas season, he paid another visit to the Memphis sanitorium where he stayed after his autumn breakdown.

Observers at his Pontiac concert noted that his weight problem is now becoming serious. It is not the sort of problem which would concern the middle-aged man-in-the-street. But it is sufficient to cast a cloud over the career of an international sex symbol. And, as has already been reported, his overweight could be linked to more complex and hereditary health symptoms.

A cloak of secrecy has been thrown over Presley's health and, despite the many varying reports which have appeared in the Press, no official statement has been made by Elvis or his manager. This could mean that Colonel Tom Parker is determined to keep his artist working as long as possible — or alternatively, that gloomy predications about Presley's health have been vastly exaggerated.

The latest word to come out of L.A., allegedly from "a source close to Presley", is that he is determined to go ahead with his overseas trips this year . . . but that his planned concerts around the world could, in fact, develop into a farewell tour.

Presley is spending the first part of the New Year resting and relaxing — and, presumably, thinking! Today (Thursday), Elvis is 41. It is likely that, during the next two months, he will take the final decision as to whether he will still be in show business when he is 42.

S'Tramp: major gig at Albert

SUPERTRAMP are to play a special one-off concert at London Royal Albert Hall on Thursday, February 5, as a "thank you" to the many thousands who ensured the success of their extensive autumn tour. During November and December, the band headlined 30 sell-out dates throughout Britain — including two at London Hammersmith Odeon — and played to a total audience of 80,000. And now they have announced plans for a similar massive U.K. tour next autumn!

They began a European tour last weekend visiting Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, France, Germany and Scandinavia, returing to Britain in time for their Albert Hall special. Towards the end of February they leave for a tour of the United States and Canada, lasting until late April. And they spend May touring Japan, Australia and New Zealand, before returning to the States to record a new album.

The band's current album "Crisis? What Crisis?" has now sold over 100,000 copies in Britain, has gone Gold in Canada, and is at present placed at No. 63 in the U.S. charts. And their previous album "Crime Of The Century" has been certified Gold in Britain, Australia, Holland and Sweden — and Platinum in Canada.

Just before Supertramp left for Europe, bassist Dougie Thomson married his long-time girl friend Christine McSawley.

SWEET ON THE RUN...

SWEET leave on January 18 for their first major tour of the United States, where their single "Fox On The Run" is currently in the Top Ten, and they will be playing over 30 dates in leading concert halls and stadia. They are also set for an extensive European tour in April taking in Scandinavia, Germany and possibly Yugoslavia and Austria. But they are not planning any British concerts until the latter part of the year. Their new self-penned and self-produced single "The Lies In Your Eyes" is released by RCA this weekend, followed in late February by their album "Give Us A Wink", which was recorded in Munich during the autumn.

● Also issued by RCA this weekend is a Nilsson single titled "Something True".

Pretties' gigs

PRETTY THINGS, who appeared at London Olympia last weekend in the Great British Music Festival, are undertaking a short eight-venue tour this month to promote their newly-released album "Savage Eye". They appear at Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall (this Saturday), London Twickenham Winning Post (Sunday), Cambridge Corn Exchange (January 16), Southend Kursaal (17), Croydon Greyhound (18), Southport Floral Hall (22), Edinburgh University (23) and Glasgow University (24).

KURSAAL FLYERS: MAJOR DATES SET

KURSAAL FLYERS go back on the road this weekend, playing a string of dates through until the end of February. They are supported on most gigs by Eddie & the Hotrods. The schedule comprises Penzance Winter Gardens (tonight, Thursday), Swindon College (Friday), Kingston Coronation Hall (this Sunday), London Marquee Club (next Tuesday), Uxbridge Brunel University (January 16), Loughborough University (17), Nottingham Playhouse (18), Norwich East Anglia University (21), Reading University (23), Malvern Winter Gardens (24), Hemel Hempstead Pavilion (29), Lancaster Univeristy (30), Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic (February 6), Manchester UMIST (7), Middlesbrough Town Hall (8), Leeds University (11), Wakefield Unity Hall (12), Hanley Victoria Hall (13), Southend Kursaal (14), Cardiff University (20), London Imperial College (21) and Guildford Civic Hall (29). The band's second album "The Great Artiste" is released by UK Records on February 6, and the following night there is a special feature on the Flyers in BBC-2's documentary "Second House".

Marley: five days at Hammersmith –U.S. REPORTS

BOB MARLEY And The Wailers will play five British dates at London Hammersmith Odeon on June 15-19 according to strong reports emanating from New York this week. The Odeon dates are scheduled to follow a nationwide tour of America by the band.

Island Records have also announced the release of a new Marley single this Friday (9th). Called "Jah Lives", the single has been available for some months now as a pre-release Jamaican import on Marley's own Tuff Gong label.

Island will not, however, be promoting "Jah Lives" (a slow chanting number) as the follow-up to "No Woman No Cry", since they feel the record does not have the commercial appeal of recent Wailers' material and is unlikely to receive widespread airplay. Promotion seems certain to be confined to Britain's black community and record shops.

Island have taken the further step of swapping the A and B sides of the Tuff Gong original, thus making the heavily echoed "dub" version of the song into the British A side.

FACES: ONE FINAL LP?

NEARLY THREE WEEKS after Rod Stewart's decision to quit the Faces, there was still no official word at press-time on the future plans of the other members of the band. As reported last week, a permanent Small Faces reunion now seems unlikely, although there is a possibility that they will re-form for a one-off concert or mini-tour later this year.

It seems virtually certain that Ron Wood will become an official member of the Rolling Stones, although this is still subjecct to final confirmation. It is understood that the terms of his contract are still being discussed, but it is likely that Wood will be flying to Rio de Janeiro within the next few days to meet Mick Jagger, with a view to signing with the Stones.

The future of Kenny Jones, Ian MacLagan and Tetsu remains in abeyance — although rumours suggesting that the former two may join David Essex have been denied. Faces manager Billy Gaff flies to America this week for meetings with Rod Stewart, particulary with a view to finalising the line-up of Stewart's own band. It is on the cards that either Jones or MacLagan, or possibly both, could become members of Stewart's outfit.

Meanwhile, NME learned this week of a plan for one final studio album by the Faces. If this project materialises, it will feature all four remaining members of the Faces — Wood, Jones, MacLagan and Tetsu — with Steve Marriott replacing Rod Stewart as vocalist. This idea is still in the embryo stage, but all the musicians involved are apparently keen to bring it to fruition.

RON WOOD

A spokesman for the Faces commented this week: "They are all playing it cool and are anxious not to rush into things. They are awaiting developments, and obviously we shall have to see what transpires when Billy Gaff meets Rod Stewart."

Parker with Ace

GRAHAM PARKER has been signed to an exclusive contract by Phonogram, for release on the Vertigo label. He is currently cutting his first album, comprising all his own songs, together with his band The Rumour whose line-up comprises Brinsley Schwarz (guitar), Bob Andrews (keyboards), Martin Belmont (guitar), Andrew Bodnar (bass) and Steve Goulding (drums). Parker and the band have just been booked for their first major tour, supporting Ace on their 12-venue itinerary starting January 15.

Late cancellation by James Brown

JAMES BROWN has cancelled his European tour at short notice. Together with his full touring revue, he was to have played four dates in this country — at London Hammersmith Odeon (January 16), Birmingham Odeon (17), Liverpool Empire (18) and Dunstable California (19) — but now ticket-holders will have to apply for cash refunds.

Reason for the cancellation is two-fold. Firstly, Brown is in the process of re-forming his band, and there is apparently insufficient time for the new members to obtain work permits under the musicians' reciprocal exchange agreement. And in the second place, several of Brown's projected gigs on the Continent were cancelled by local promoters, thus making his tour an uneconomic proposition.

It is understood that plans are now in hand to bring Brown to Britain later in the year, probably in about four months' time.

● Blood, Sweat & Tears are now expected to visit Britain later this year, following the cancellation of their projected February tour. Singer David Clayton-Thomas, who recently re-joined the band, collapsed a week before Christmas suffering from nervous exhaustion and will be out of action for three months. Promoter Barry Dickins, who had set up their tour next month, commented: "If they do decide to come later in the year, they'll have to find another promoter. I don't want to know!"

Julie Felix in concert

JULIE FELIX is to headline a lengthy British concert tour, starting at the end of this month and running through until early April. Several dates have still to be finalised, but those confirmed so far are:

AYLESBURY Civic Hall (January 29), SCARBOROUGH Spa Grand Hall (February 6), MANSFIELD Civic Hall (7), Malvern Festival Theatre (10), BLACKBURN Windsor Hall (12), ROCHDALE Champness Hall (13), CARLISLE Coach House (19), WOKINGTON Carnegie Theatre (20), GRIZEDALE Theatre-in-the-Forest (21), KENDAL Arts Centre (22), CROYDON Fairfield Hall (March 2), ALDERSHOT Princess Hall (4), LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville (5), WINCHESTER King Alfred College (6), LIVERPOOL Royal Court Theatre (7), SWINDON Wyvern Theatre (28), SALISBURY Playhouse (29), BIRMINGHAM Repertory Theatre (April 4).

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FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending January 13, 1971

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	GRANDAD	Clive Dunn (Columbia)
2	2	WHEN I'M DEAD AND GONE	McGuiness Flint (Capitol)
3	3	RIDE A WHITE SWAN	T. Rex (Fly)
4	4	I HEAR YOU KNOCKING	Dave Edmunds (MAM)
9	5	I'LL BE THERE	Jackson Five (Tamla Motown)
6	6	IT'S ONLY MAKE BELIEVE	Glen Campbell (Capitol)
5	7	CRACKLIN' ROSIE	Neil Diamond (UNI)
7	8	NOTHING RHYMED	Gilbert O'Sullivan (MAM)
10	9	(BLAME IT ON THE) PONY EXPRESS	Johnny Johnson And The Bandwagon (Bell)
8	10	HOME LOVING MAN	Andy Williams (CBS)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending January 12, 1966

Last Week	This Week		
2	1	KEEP ON RUNNING	Spencer Davis (Fontana)
1	2	DAY TRIPPER/WE CAN WORK IT OUT	Beatles (Parlophone)
3	3	THE RIVER	Ken Dodd (Columbia)
5	4	MY SHIP IS COMING IN	Walker Brothers (Philips)
4	5	THE CARNIVAL IS OVER	Seekers (Columbia)
8	6	LET'S HANG ON	Four Seasons (Philips)
18	7	SPANISH FLEA	Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass (Pye Int.)
10	8	TILL THE END OF THE DAY	Kinks (Pye)
16	9	A MUST TO AVOID	Herman's Hermits (Columbia)
7	10	RESCUE ME	Fontella Bass (Chess)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 13, 1961

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	POETRY IN MOTION	Johnny Tillotson (London)
3	2	I LOVE YOU	Cliff Richard (Columbia)
2	3	SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME	Drifters (London)
4	4	IT'S NOW OR NEVER	Elvis Presley (RCA)
8	5	PERFIDIA	Ventures (London)
13	6	PORTRAIT OF MY LOVE	Matt Monro (Parlophone)
12	7	COUNTING TEARDROPS	Emile Ford (Pye)
5	8	LONELY PUP	Adam Faith (Parlophone)
7	9	GOODNESS GRACIOUS ME	Peter Sellers & Sophia Loren (Parlophone)
11	10	BLUE ANGEL	Roy Orbison (London)

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS C·H·A·R·T·S

SINGLES

Week ending 10th January 1976

This Week	Last Week		Weeks in Chart	Highest Position
1	(1)	BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY Queen (EMI)	9	1
2	(5)	LET'S TWIST AGAIN/THE TWIST Chubby Checker (London)	6	2
3	(4)	THE TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE Laurel & Hardy (United Artists)	7	2
4	(11)	GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE Sailor (Epic)	4	4
5	(2)	I BELIEVE IN FATHER CHRISTMAS Greg Lake (Manticore)	5	2
6	(6)	HAPPY TO BE ON AN ISLAND IN THE SUN ...Demis Roussos (Philips)	7	5
7	(12)	ART FOR ART'S SAKE 10 c.c. (Mercury)	6	7
8	(9)	WIDE EYED AND LEGLESS Andy Fairweather Low (A&M)	5	8
9	(3)	IT'S GONNA BE A COLD COLD CHRISTMAS .....Dana (GTO)	4	3
10	(10)	GOLDEN YEARS David Bowie (RCA)	6	9
11	(7)	NA NA IS THE SADDEST WORD Stylistics (Avco)	7	5
12	(8)	YOU SEXY THING Hot Chocolate (Rak)	10	1
13	(13)	CAN I TAKE YOU HOME LITTLE GIRL ..... Drifters (Bell)	6	13
14	(14)	SHOW ME YOU'RE A WOMAN Mud (Private Stock)	6	8
15	(16)	IF I COULD .....David Essex (CBS)	5	15
16	(18)	IN DULCE JUBILO/ON HORSEBACK Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	2	16
17	(19)	MAMA MIA ..... Abba (Epic)	4	17
18	(20)	ITCHYCOO PARK Small Faces (Immediate)	3	18
19	(15)	RENTA SANTA Chris Hill (Philips)	5	11
20	(28)	KING OF THE COPS Bill Howard (Penny Farthing)	3	20
21	(25)	FIRST IMPRESSIONS Impressions (Curtom)	5	19
22	(24)	DO THE BUS STOP Fatback Band (Polydor)	4	22
23	(29)	BOTH ENDS BURNING Roxy Music (Island)	2	23
24	(22)	MONEY HONEY Bay City Rollers (Bell)	8	3
25	(—)	MIDNIGHT RIDER Paul Davidson (Tropical)	1	25
26	(—)	LET THE MUSIC PLAY Barry White (20th Century)	1	26
27	(17)	ALL AROUND MY HAT Steeleye Span (Chrysalis)	8	6
28	(26)	(THINK OF ME) WHEREVER YOU ARE Ken Dodd (EMI)	4	22
29	(23)	CHRISTMAS IN DREADLAND/ Judge Dread (Cactus)	3	23
30	(—)	I BELEIVE I'M GONNA LOVE YOU Frank Sinatra (Reprise)	1	30

BUBBLING UNDER

DREAMS OF YOU—Ralph McTell (Warner Bros.)
GREEN GREEN GRASS OF HOME—Elvis Presley (RCA)
LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY—Donna Summer (GTO)
THE OLD RUGGED CROSS—Ethna Campbell (Philips)
MILKY WAY—Sheer Elegance (Pye)

ALBUMS

Week ending January 1976

This Week	Last Week		Weeks in Chart	Highest Position
1	(1)	A NIGHT AT THE OPERA Queen (EMI)	6	1
2	(2)	PERRY COMO'S 40 GREATEST HITS (K-Tel)	12	1
3	(7)	OMMADAWN ..Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	10	3
4	(3)	MAKE THE PARTY LAST James Last (Polydor)	8	3
5	(6)	24 ORIGINAL HITS Drifters (Atlantic)	5	3
6	(9)	ATLANTIC CROSSING Rod Stewart (Warner Bros.)	21	1
7	(5)	WOULDN'T YOU LIKE IT Bay City Rollers (Bell)	6	4
8	(14)	ALL AROUND MY HAT Steeleye Span (Chrysalis)	10	6
9	(4)	40 GOLDEN GREATS Jim Reeves (Arcade)	15	1
10	(8)	PETERS & LEE FAVOURITES (Philips)	13	3
11	(10)	ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR David Essex (CBS)	17	3
12	(18)	SHAVED FISH John Lennon (Apple)	9	6
13	(22)	CRISIS? WHAT CRISIS? Supertramp (A&M)	6	10
14	(17)	ROLLED GOLD Rolling Stones (Decca)	6	7
15	(12)	GET RIGHT INTAE HIM Billy Connolly (Polydor)	7	11
16	(19)	BEST OF STYLISTICS .....(Avco)	39	1
17	(23)	ONE OF THESE NIGHTS Eagles (Asylum)	28	4
18	(21)	WISH YOU WERE HERE Pink Floyd (Harvest)	17	1
19	(29)	FISH OUT OF WATER Chris Squire (Atlantic)	2	19
20	(11)	40 SUPER GREATS ..... (K-Tel)	4	11
21	(26)	BREAKAWAY .. Art Garfunkel (CBS)	9	6
22	(15)	ELVIS PRESLEY'S 40 GREATEST HITS (Arcade)	23	2
23	(28)	THE VERY BEST OF ROGER WHITTAKER ..... (EMI)	19	4
24	(13)	SONGS OF JOY Nigel Brooks Singers (K-Tel)	6	11
25	(16)	DISCO HITS '75 ..... (Arcade)	9	15
26	(20)	WALT DISNEY'S GREATEST HITS (Ronco)	4	19
27	(—)	THE TOP 25 FROM YOUR 100 BEST TUNES .....(Decca)	1	27
28	(—)	THE HISSING OF SUMMER LAWNS Joni Mitchell (Asylum)	1	28
29	(27)	BARRY WHITE'S GREATEST HITS (20th Century)	7	20
30	(—)	TUBULAR BELLS Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	117	1

BUBBLING UNDER

DARK SIDE OF THE MOON—Pink Floyd (Harvest)
20 SONGS OF JOY—Nigel Brooks Singers (K-Tel)
USE YOUR IMAGINATION—Mud (Private Stock)
ZUMA—Neil Young (Reprise)
YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL—Stylistics (Avco)

U.S. SINGLES

Week ending January 10, 1976

This Week	Last Week		
1	(2)	THEME FROM MAHOGANY	Diana Ross
2	(3)	CONVOY	C. W. McCall
3	(1)	I WRITE THE SONGS	Barry Manilow
4	(5)	LOVE ROLLERCOASTER	Ohio Players
5	(6)	FOX ON THE RUN	Sweet
6	(7)	FLY AWAY	John Denver
7	(8)	YOU SEXY THING	Hot Chocolate
8	(9)	I LOVE MUSIC	O'Jays
9	(10)	WALK AWAY FROM LOVE ...	David Ruffin
10	(4)	SATURDAY NIGHT	Bay City Rollers
11	(12)	SING A SONG	Earth, Wind & Fire
12	(14)	BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO	Neil Sedaka
13	(15)	50 WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR LOVER	Paul Simon
14	(24)	I LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY	Donna Summer
15	(16)	EVIL WOMAN	Electric Light Orchestra
16	(17)	LOVE MACHINE	Miracles
17	(19)	COUNTRY BOY	Glen Campbell
18	(18)	OVER MY HEAD	Fleetwood Mac
19	(20)	ROCK 'N ROLL ALL NIGHT	Kiss
20	(21)	WINNERS & LOOSERS	Hamilton, Joe Frank & Reynolds
21	(22)	TIMES OF YOUR LIFE	Paul Anka
22	(11)	THAT'S THE WAY I LIKE IT	K.C. & The Sunshine Band
23	(26)	SQUEEZE BOX	The Who
24	(13)	LET'S DO IT AGAIN	Staple Singers
25	(28)	LOVE HURTS	Nazareth
26	(29)	PALOMA BLANCA	George Baker
27	(27)	HURRICANE (Part 1)	Bob Dylan
28	(30)	BABY FACE	Wing & A Prayer
29	(—)	LET IT SHINE	Olivia Newton John
30	(—)	TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT	Eagles

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

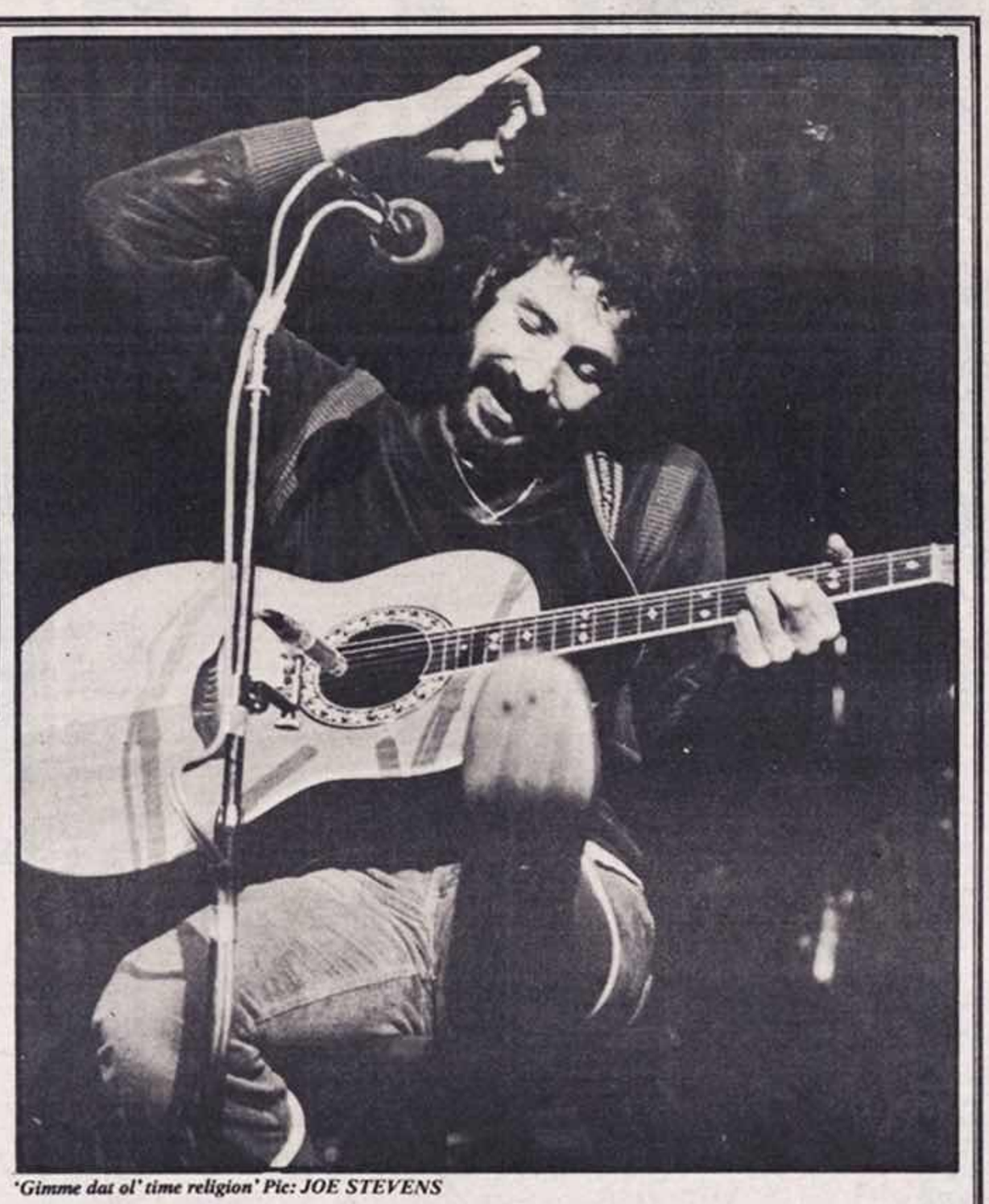
U.S. ALBUMS

Week ending January 10, 1976

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	CHICAGO'S GREATEST HITS	
2	(2)	AMERICA'S GREATEST HITS	
3	(4)	GRATITUDE	Earth, Wind & Fire
4	(3)	WINDSONG	John Denver
5	(5)	HISSING OF SUMMER LAWNS	Joni Mitchell
6	(6)	ROCK OF THE WESTIES	Elton John
7	(10)	STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS	Paul Simon
8	(7)	K.C. & THE SUNSHINE BAND	
9	(12)	HELEN REDDY'S GREATEST HITS	
10	(8)	RED OCTOPUS	Jefferson Starship
11	(11)	TRYIN' TO GET THE FEELING	Barry Manilow
12	(14)	NUMBERS	Cat Stevens
13	(13)	FAMILY REUNION	O'Jays
14	(15)	SEALS & CROFTS GREATEST HITS	
15	(16)	BREAKAWAY	Art Garfunkel
16	(17)	BAY CITY ROLLERS	
17	(18)	ALIVE	Kiss
18	(19)	BEST OF CARLY SIMON	
19	(20)	ONE OF THESE NIGHTS	Eagles
20	(22)	MAHOGANY	Soundtrack
21	(9)	ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHRISTMAS	John Denver
22	(23)	WISH YOU WERE HERE	Pink Floyd
23	(24)	RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN	
24	(27)	THE WHO BY NUMBERS	
25	(26)	ZUMA	Neil Young
26	(29)	BLACK BEAR ROAD	C. W. McCall
27	(—)	LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY .	Donna Summer
28	(21)	SAVE ME	Silver Convention
29	(30)	HOUSE PARTY	Temptations
30	(—)	HONEY	Ohio Players

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

Stage set, Royal Albert Hall. Pic: STEVE EMBERTON



'Gimme dat ol' time religion' Pic: JOE STEVENS

The Road To Damascus

A CAT STEVENS SPIRITUAL TOURS VACATION: Meet your courier at Curzon Street, where east meets west, and journey with him and his faithful stick Amberthwiddle through the picturesque fog-shrouded pinnacles of the mind. Report: BOB WOFFINDEN

RONALD BIGGS, the last of the Great Train Robbers still not in captivity, was finally run to ground by the *Daily Express* in a Rio de Janeiro hotel — where Cat Stevens was coincidentally also resident. So one day he returned to the hotel to find the whole area covered with police cars and reporters. Had they come to take him away? Had his South American hideaway been rumbled?

"I was a bit worried, 'cos I knew things could sometimes get heavy there."

But if Stevens was unaware of Biggs' existence, no-one was aware of his either and he was allowed to enter unmolested.

However, if one of the world's reporters gathered there had had the *nous* to examine the hotel's guest-book, he might have achieved a small consolation scoop, because at that time Stevens, with massive dollar earnings, had just secretly become one of the first British rock stars to go into voluntary tax exile; in this respect at least, he was ahead of the pack. It seemed that he was all in favour of giving away his money, but he wanted to select the beneficiaries himself.

I interviewed Steve Georgiou — as he was born in London in 1947 — in his management's offices in Curzon Street a few weeks back, just before his brief British concert tour. I can hardly say they put out the welcome mat; the prevalent vibe seemed to be along the lines of Journalists are the lowest form of human existance and NME writers are the lowest form of journalists.

It was an atmosphere hardly conducive to convivial conversation; but Cat himself, arriving carrying a walking-stick and wearing an embroidered skull cap, was cordial and animated; he had just discovered, to open his stage show, *the* piece of music (Ravel's "Daphnis And Chloe").

We adjourned to a private room, and set the cassette to automatic pilot.

"That Biggs incident happened the very first time I was in Brazil — it was just by chance that I'd arrived there; but I saw the carnival then, and I just knew I had to go back to see it again. It's a People's thing — they have the opportunity, just once in a year, to do it all themselves.

The annual carnival in Trinidad is also good, but different; it's more lyrical in a way. The Brazilian one — well, that's just *hotter*, with more accent on the music."

I asked how familiar he was with the whole country.

"I must admit I haven't been around that much. But I have been to Brazilia, and that's really frightening. It's so sterile — do you know it has the highest suicide rate of any city in the world? It's just not *here*.

"Just outside the city, a friend of mine has a commune-type farm, and that's really nice, but Brazilia itself is just like a big office block with a road running through it.

"I haven't stopped travelling though for the last two or three years. I've been moving around everywhere. I really love England — I wish I could stay here more.

"Anything you can't have you want more than anything."

CAT SAYS he has fond memories of all his British gigs, and recalls with particular affection one at Leeds University, with just him and Alun Davies, where he sang "Peace Train" and the audience responded with fervour, crowding the front of the stage and providing another memorable 'live at Leeds.'

He's obviously approaching the forthcoming British dates with considerable enthusiasm, and agrees that a performer's most exacting gigs are the ones in London.

"People have a keen eye for detail in London, and on stage you feel that. It's more or less like having a therapeutic talk with an audience and, hopefully, getting off at the end of it."

His act — still built around the tight coterie of Alun Davies, Gerry Conway and Jean Roussel — has now been augmented by an American guitarist, Mark Warner ("to fill in those little bits I have on record") and a Brazilian percussionist, Chico, and reinforced by the return of Larry Steele (bass, congas). There are three girl back-up singers. All musical aspects were therefore organised as Cat would ideally want it to be — as was everything else.

"I designed the stage, too. It's a huge arch — it's like taking the Hollywood Bowl round with you. There's a backdrop, a mandala, which has been sewn specially. It looks very carnivalish, and that's the feeling I want to get on this tour . . . That's how the music — the Ravel — fits in perfectly as well — it has a beautiful, surging kind of magic, very Hollywood-style."

And that was the concert, which I'd have been able to comment on were it not for the Night Of The Big Fog. Nonetheless, I suspect that the law of diminishing returns might begin to apply. How many would prefer to see Cat Stevens simply accompanied without the expensive trappings that transatlantic success seems to render essential?

Certainly I seem to detect a greater general fondness for his earlier work on Island ("Teaser And The Firecat" and "Tea For The Tillerman" can be regarded as the twin peaks) with its simple nursery-rhyme directness ("Longer Boats", "Morning Has Broken", "Bitter Blue") than his post-"Foreigner" work, often cluttered, over-arranged and imbued with a mystical semi-awareness.

It is this latter side of Stevens that has been uppermost of late.

"I think it's a world-conscious thing that I'm into. I love travelling, and I don't like to stay in one place and see just one point of view. I'd love to be invisible, 'cos I'm an observationalist.

"I can do that until I die; every place has its own charm. You get to a certain point where basically you're at ease with yourself and you can stand to be with yourself. It just means I don't get too involved, which suits me. I don't completely fit into any category."

Stevens measures his words, talking deliberately, often hesitantly; he's evidently grappling with received ideas that he has not yet fully learnt to articulate; but equally it's clear that his strong religious convictions are the pivotal point of his everyday consciousness.

"My manager has a theory that most writers, poets, always end up returning to Christianity. In the beginning, if you come from that whole background, school and church, you have to reject it because it has been laid on too heavy (either that, or you stay with it, which is a different scene completely), but though a lot of people leave, a lot later come back.

"Christianity is basically . . . what can you say . . . a disguise for the truth, which is Christ himself."

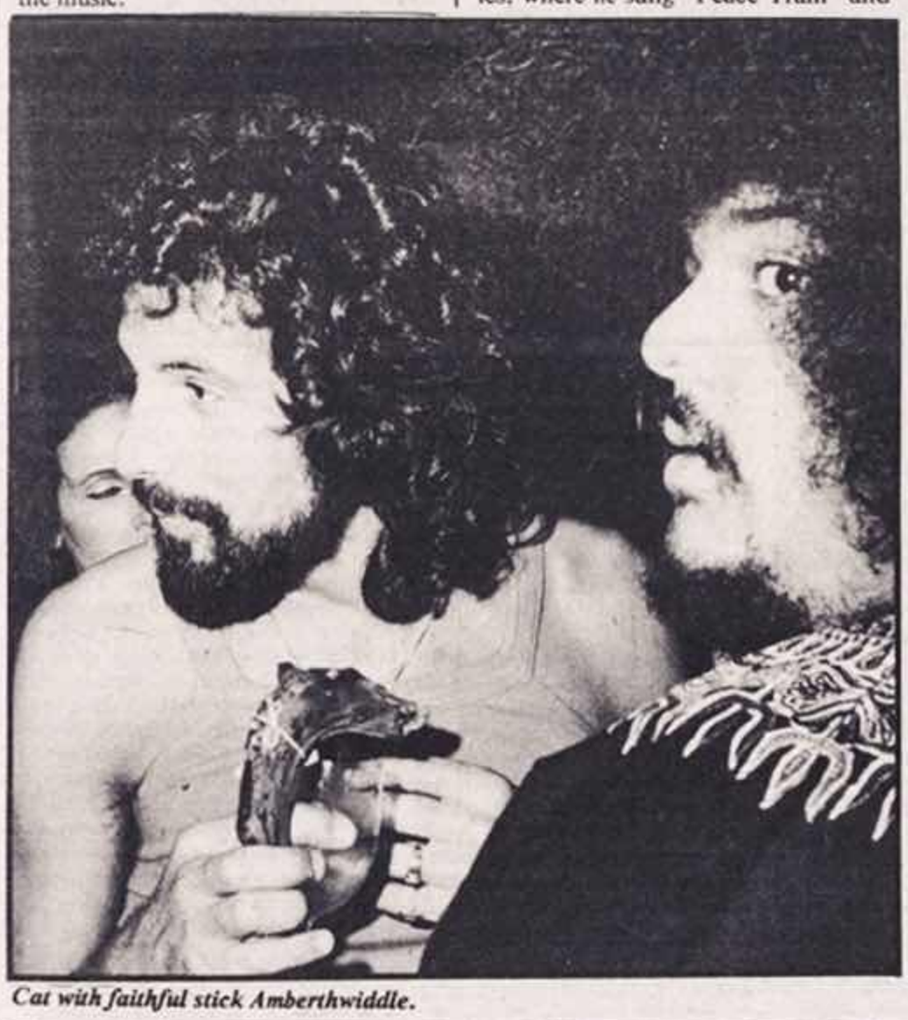
So would get to Him then through orthodox religious channels?

"No way. I think it all comes straight from the highest point, through a personal reciprocation. Some accident can happen which leaves you open to it."

At which point Stevens bares his own soul, to talk about the accident that happened to him, his personal Road To Damascus.

"I was riding in a mini-cab, passing a church and I saw this crucifix. Well, I was beginning to think too much about my own selfish — what — *id*, and I almost rejected the Cross, and we passed, and then a car went smack" — he claps his hands to heighten the dramatic effect — "into the back of us,

■ *Continues over*



Cat with faithful stick Amberthwiddle.

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THRILLS

Edited by Mick Farren

My Generation: John Cale joins Patti and Lenny Kaye. *Pic: BOB GRUEN*

PATTI: The Ultimate Rock Fan becomes the Ultimate Rock Performer

SOME WEEK here. Any seven days that starts out with Bruce Springsteen avidly watching Patti Smith do her stuff at the Bottom Line and ends with John Cale and Lou Reed "performing" together at a poetry reading can't be all bad.

Patti's show at the Bottom Line (seven of them over a three-night period) had been sold out for weeks; standing room only tickets were on sale on the night, and the ambience at Mercer and Fourth Streets was not totally unlike that when Springsteen played there some months ago; lines all the way down the block, t-shirts and buttons sold outside the club, and a definite Air Of Excitement.

Of course, the differences were mighty. The Press (while not the *covers* of *Time* and *Newsweek*) had been building heavily for Patti in preceding weeks; she'd been in the *New York Times* magazine section, *Time, People, Newsweek*... her album was bulleted on all three trade charts, but Ms Smith and her band hadn't really performed since the finish of their LP with the exception of a fabulous but somewhat nervous appearance at the Arista Festival late last year.

Opening night, late show, had a heavy mixture of rock critics and street fans, and Bruce Springsteen almost went unnoticed as he sat with his producer Jon Landau. (Springsteen is so short, I never realized).

Patti ambled out onstage alone, and it became evident that she was to be her own opening act. For the earlier show, she read some poetry from "Witt", but at this late one, she seemed slightly disoriented, rambling on, losing train of thought, asking the audience to ask her questions.

It was a combination of "press conference" and just hanging out, and it was scary, painful and yet exciting... for this ten minute period

LOU looks pensive; PATTI lends sympathetic arm. Backstage at Bottom Line.
Pic: RICHARD E. AARON.

immediately established not only her vulnerability, but also her rapport.

What this did, also, was point out at last that Patti is part of a group, a band, within a rock 'n' roll context; for when her musicians came back onstage with her (after a brief break when she played dub tapes from Jamaican singles) it was invigorating. The hell with all the intellectuals and their "even-though-she's-doing-rock 'n'-roll-she-brings-art-to-it" guff — as soon as Smith, Lenny Kaye, Ivan Kral, Richard Sohl and Jay Daugherty broke into Lou Reed's "We're Gonna Have a Real Good Time Together", any such rationale was superfluous.

The energy level was intense, and for those who still feel Patti's band is technically deficient, let them listen to an early Stones LP. Or better still, Velvet Underground.

It's the magic that can't be learned; the rest of the stuff comes.

"I am the first Patti Smith," she proclaimed, "Or maybe the second Anna Magnani..."

Wearing a "Lion of Judah" shirt which proclaimed "Love Rastafari", jeans and ballet slippers, Patti moved onstage in a visually compelling way: not only were her fists punching the air, she would sway, bend down sort of on all fours and move in time to the music. The effect was closer to dancing than she's attempted in performance before, and great to watch.

A few new songs followed: "Set Me Free" from the film "Privilege" with one of Patti's poems to Rimbaud inserted in the middle; "Ain't It Strange" — heavily influenced by reggae with a great chant at the end... *"I move in another dimension, I move in another dimension"*; "Space Monkey" — which is an older song of Patti's, but has been re-styled to sound like a great rock 'n' roll number, could easily be a single, and reminds me of the Stones; "Redondo Beach" and "Free Money" from the LP; "Pale Blue Eyes" — done as well as Lou Reed ever did it, with Lenny Kaye's guitar solo immaculate; "Eyes" segued into "Louie, Louie"; "Pumpin" — the Hurricane Carter victory dance — "Birdland", and then "Land", as always, improvisd.

This night it was amazing, for as Patti almost looked right at Springsteen (although she later confessed to me that she really didn't care that he was there, she cared about those she knew had been there for the past five years) she sang/chanted, *"You'll never get nothing perfect from me/Please don't me me a formula/Give me the right/to rock and roll/And I'll take it"*... Patti Smith, really the ultimate rock and roll fan, became through this performance, an ultimate rock and roll performer. It was an historic night.

Made even more so when, after the first encore "Time Is On My Side" (amazing) was finished, John Cale came out onstage to join the band in "My Generation". Patti picked up her guitar (a Fender Duo-Sonic — maple neck, the one used by Tom Verlaine to do his solo on "Little Johnny Jewel" for you footnote freaks), and added to the amazing rock 'n' roll sounds... by this time the audience was completely wild.

I WENT back the next night, and the next. Saturday late show was broadcast live over WNEW-FM radio, and all over town kids taped the show for their collections... (Lenny Kaye got into a cab on his way home from the Bottom Line and the cab driver played some of the performance back to him...).

"Rock 'n' roll always goes through creepy times," Patti said in her opening Johnny Carson-type monologue, "we made it up, so we can make it better again."

She read a poem, sang some of her earlier poem/songs... and the band came onstage with her for another night of truly energized rock 'n' roll. Not since the Velvets has this city known such a performance, but Patti's set transcended any cultist tag, and with the success of her album in America (and a nationwide tour beginning this week) it soon isn't just going to be "New York" any more. And remember, you read it here first.

PATTI, SUNDAY, night — 2 a.m., a special added show. Lou Reed was there, watched her do his "Pale Blue Eyes" and "We're Gonna Have A Real Good Time Together" and seemed stunned. Peter Wolf, Faye Dunaway, Richard Dreyfuss were also in the audience. John Cale onstage again for "My Generation" with a silver and black scarf wrapped around his face... must have lost his mask.

"Hey Lisa," Patti asided from the stage, "how d'ya like my new getup? A grey, simple, cashmere sweater, army surplus fatigues, black supporthose, and black ballet slippers"... It was terrific.

"I've been reading all these articles on me," she announced later, "and I am checking myself out. I think what it is... is that I have a posthumous appeal... in case you need a new angle."

DREAMY HUH?

FOLLOWERS OF THE Balcombe Street siege may be interested to know that back in the summer *Modern Screen* magazine carried the artist's impression of Michael Wilson, alleged killer of notorious civil libertarian Ross McWhirter and of PC. Tibble in West Kensington late in 1974.

***Modern Screen*, however, was not too concerned with the justices or injustices of the matter.**

Indeed, with a stunning sense of relevance *Modern Screen* pointed out to its readers just how closely the allegedly notorious Michael Wilson resembled Robert Redford.

■ CHRIS SALEWICZ

THE CHANGING FACE OF BOWIE

1966 — Mod On The Tracks

1969 — Spaced Oddity

1971 — Honky Dory

1972 — This Little Ziggy...

1973 — Aladdin Zany

THRILLS

JUST A WEEK before his 41st birthday the bottom dropped out of Elvis' world.

Picture it if you can — the King on stage in front of 60,000 people trying to show 'em that it's fun to be fat — that his hips can still swivel,' his pelvis still thrust — that he's blessed with all the accountrements that Freddie Mercury possesses.

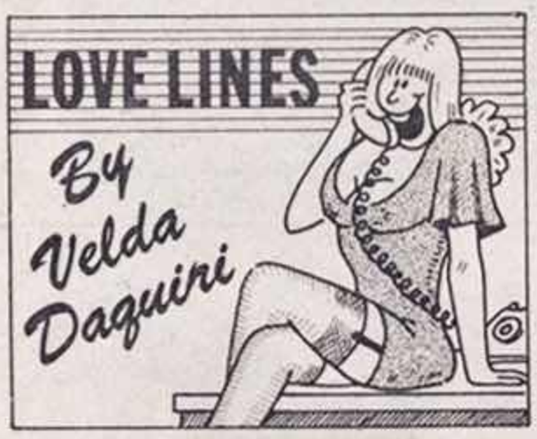
Hardly had he launched into his act when the debacle — a split down the backside seam, ripped apart. Yes, it had happened again. (Last summer you may recall, leaning over to kiss a girl in the audience he took the backside out of his trousers.).

But Elvis being a true performer (?) and evidently used to coping with such disasters merely returned backstage, reappeared minutes later and apologised.

Needless to say the show was an incredible success.

Meanwhile, back in London, this Saturday the British fan club celebrates 20 years of existence at London's Holiday Inn, Swiss Cottage, which Elvis freaks will be attending presumably in trousers.

☐ JULIE WEBB



I'M HARDLY surprised that **Bianca Jagger** is booking into hotels under the name of **Zelda Fitzgerald** and apparently *slamming* down the phone on reporters when they write such *bitchy* things about her. I mean take her bottom (Mick did) — only the other week the *Sunday Express* were asking if it was scraggy.

Scraggy? Well dear I wouldn't know *of course* (one can only speculate) but according to the *Express* her film company were auditioning for people to play the part of her bottom since hers was apparently *below par*.

They even quoted some anonymous young lady who said "I did not make it, mine was too big. But it is better than Bianca's — hers is scraggy."

Cow.

According to her film company, there will be *no* nude bum parts in the "Trick Or Treat" movie, in which Bianca plays the part of a lesbian. "It is not," said a spokesman, "a tit and bum movie and anyone who thinks it is will be sadly disappointed."

They also added "No one is being auditioned for the part of Bianca's bottom."

Well Bianca, if I were you I'd stop sitting on barbed wire fences dear, swig back a large brandy, look Mick straight in the eyes and say 'bottoms up'.

Should **Mick** decide to abandon Bianca in a search for the perfect bottom I feel I must inform him that his former doe-eyed waif girlfriend, she of the convent education, **Marianne Faithfull** has apparently *written him off*.

In an *Evening News* interview she says "I suppose all the headaches began when I left my husband for Mick" and later whimpers "Mick and I could never live together, we were destroying one another and it got so I felt one of us had to die. That's when I went through all those silly suicide things."

She does however concede that as far as Jagger goes, Bianca is best.

"Bianca treats Mick just right. She's much cleverer with him than I ever was."

Actually I think Marianne is the clever one. One husband, one Mick Jagger, one **Lord Rossmore** and one Oliver Musker and still a *fledgling* at 29, dear.

What a *shock* it was, dear, to find that **Cher** (I'm back with my husband but only for business) **Allman** is expecting a basket in July.

Cher married Gregg last July, only days after her divorce from **Sonny Bono,** but a week after the nuptuals sued Gregg for divorce.

The *reconciliation* (yawn) took place when Gregg sued for divorce.

I'm told however that the steadily expanding Cher and father Gregg are presently very happy together. Yuk.

I hear from America that the wholesome teenager **Linda** *(Exorcist)* **Blair,** who when possessed turned green and uttered oaths *unbefitting* a young lady, is *keeping company* with hot and nasty **Jim Dandy.**

Dandy, lead singer with **Black Oak Arkansas,** he of the loud drawl and grapefruit trousers has apparently been casting a protective ring around Ms Blair, who has been a regular member of BOA's entourage during their current US tour.

Bringing you the hot poop from inside the wonderful music industry

TWO YEARS OF INVESTIGATION by officials of the British Phonographic Institute (BPI) led to a raid on a house in Madeley Heath, near Stoke-on-Trent, where over 5000 bootleg albums were discovered, as well as a heap of correspondence giving full details of the UK distribution network including retail outlets and the main sources of supply in Germany, Holland and America.

This is the fourth successful prosecution brought by the BPI in 1975 and without doubt the largest.

It also represents a toughening in the law against bootlegging. The BPI now have a legal right to get inspection orders for premises that are thought to contain illegal pressings. It looks as if the days of the **Great White Wonder** and other such goodies are numbered.

BRITAIN'S ENTRY into the EEC has hit the gigantic West German record industry where it hurts most of all — the pocket.

Major label bosses are bemoaning that cheap albums — imported legally from England without tariff barriers — are drastically reducing the profit margins enjoyed by German record pressers.

Things have now reached a point where imports from Blighty now control about 15 per cent of the entire West German market.

This situation has been further aggravated by the fact that over the last 12 months the sale of both pre-recorded and blank cassettes has increased by 65 per cent whereas album sales have risen by only 22 per cent. Likewise, pop singles which retail at approx. £1.20 are beginning to slump, being bought mainly on impulse.

In a concerted bid to control the market, major German labels are resorting to block buying commercial TV spots. However, a company who resorts to these tactics needs to sell 300,000 copies of any record to break even.

It is anticipated that in the next year cassettes will dominate the German music industry.

T.V. ROCK SERIAL?

WHETHER IT signifies the coming of age of rock'n'roll or its death is not known.

Whichever, the crazy, wacky topsy-turvy world of rock'n'roll is to be featured in six hour-long comedy shows that Thames Television will be putting out shortly.

Andy Mackay. Speak to me!!! Tell all about "Rock Follies".

"It's actually a fullscale project involving the clash of three worlds: the world of show business — actors and actresses — and of television — which is like a strange world of compromise — and the world of rock business . . . which have all suddenly come together in this series which is really a very funny, very wry, very observant series of comedies about the rock business generally and involving these three girls — Julie Covington, Charlotte Cornwall and Rula Lenska — who are supposed to be actresses. Supposed to be actresses in the play as opposed to supposed to be actresses in real life."

With hilarious results.

"It's basically a series . . . Actually, a serial in old-fashioned terms in that you have to see all six plays in order to get the full meaning."

Like "Poldark"?

"No. Not terribly. The only Cornish connection is me."

But what are you doing in it, Andy?

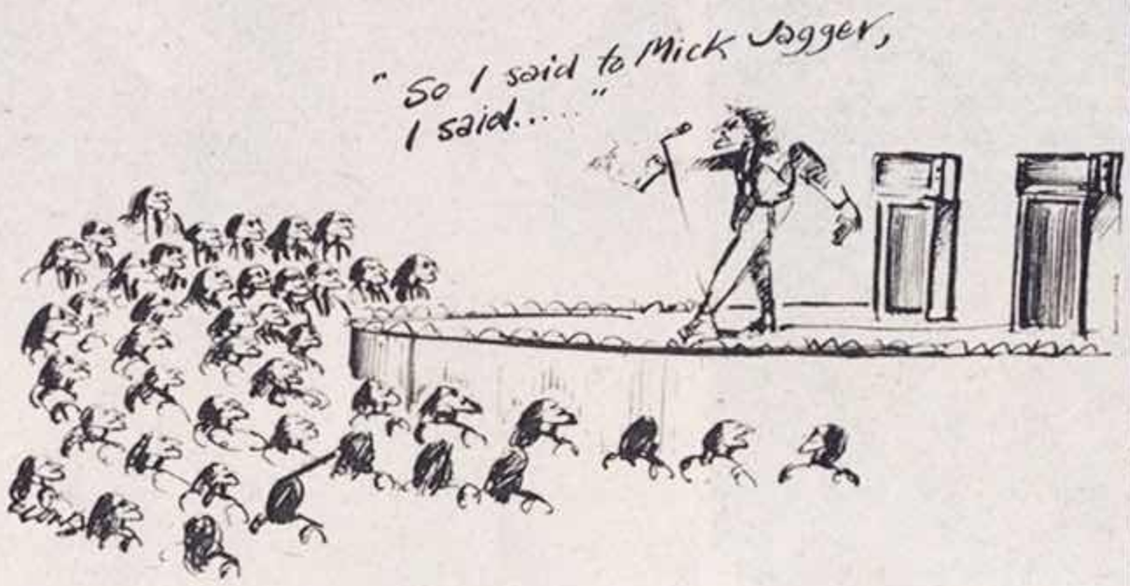
"What am I doing in it? Writing the music for the songs that occur throughout the series. Which are basically the songs that the girls sing — they're a group: three girls with a backing group. That's the concept . . . They go on the road at one stage.

"And I write the music which they perform on stage which is about half the music. Plus odd bits and pieces that crop up . . . They're supposed to meet in this revival of a show called "Broadway Annie" and then each episode has a key song which is a kind of summing up of the particular mood or whatever of that episode. Which is a fantasy number in that it's not constrained by having to sound like a performance.

"Anyway there's six of them. Six of the big

Continues over

LOWRY



"He's begun to take his 'rock critic as superstar' role far too seriously."

(Number one in a series of several)

1973 — There's A Hole In The Carpet, So You Can See The 1980 Floor Show

1974 — I Wanna Be You Philly Dog (Woa-yeh)

1975 — Portrait Of An Artist

1975 — A New Austerity For The Dark Ages

1976 — They Say The Neon Lights Are Bright On Broadway.

Pics: JOE STEVENS, MICK ROCK and a cast of thousands!

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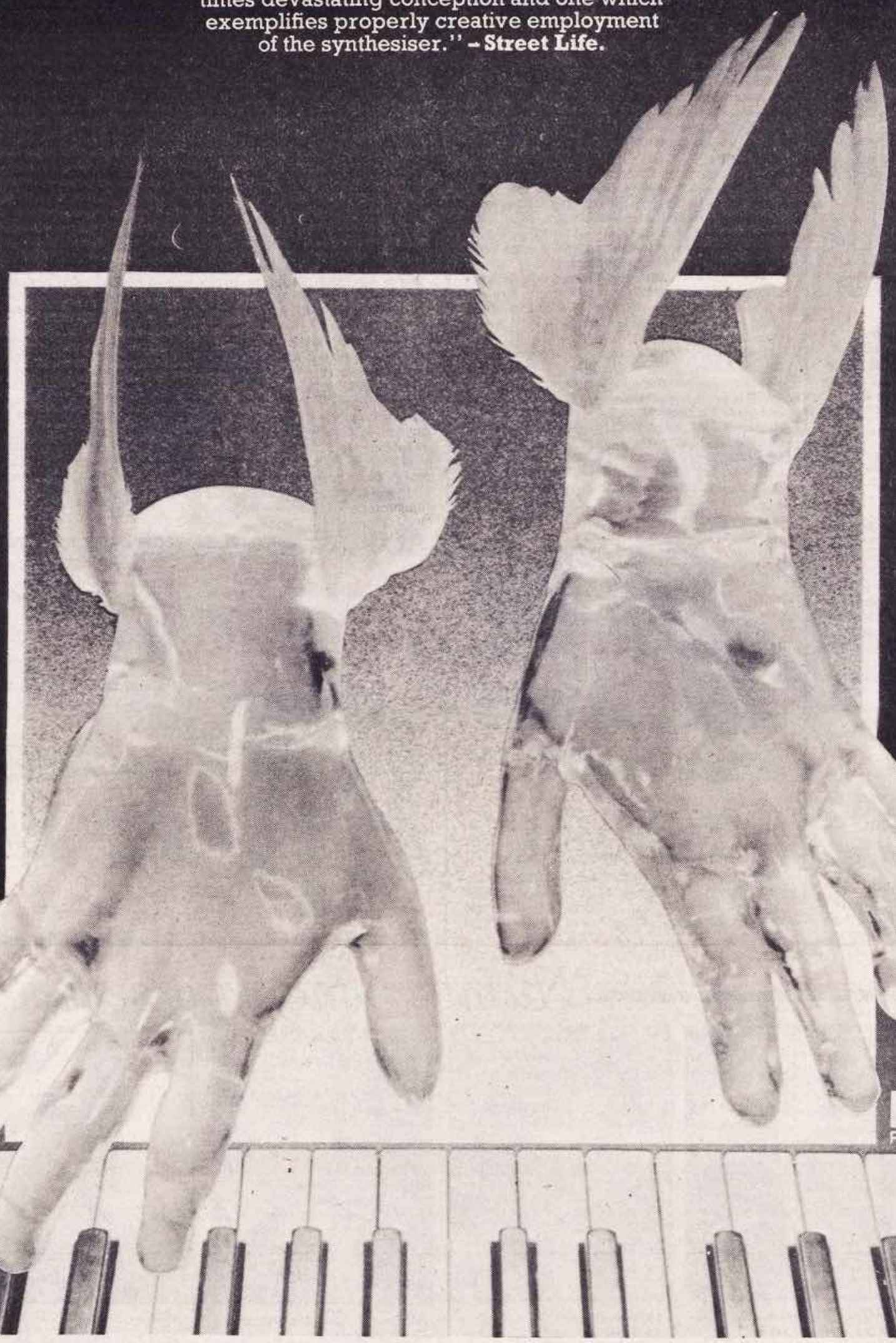
tasteful, exciting and panoramic in scope."
– Melody Maker.

" 'Heaven and Hell' is a finely crafted, at
times devastating conception and one which
exemplifies properly creative employment
of the synthesiser." **– Street Life.**



RCA
Records and Tapes

THRILLS

songs. There's another ten 'live' numbers . . . It's quite a lot of music. I think I've written seventeen songs so far.

"Howard Shuman, the script-writer, is writing the lyrics."

One wonders if by any curious coincidence a soundtrack album will result?

"It's quite strange because although it didn't seem it when we first started it's actually as much work as doing a film. It's been in production now for four months. By the time it's finished it'll have been in production for nearly six months. Six hours of tape and about an hour and twenty minutes of actual music.

"I mean, we're only going to make **one** album from it.

"But simply because the songs have turned out well it would be nice to do an album to kind of do justice to them. I think it's probably the best music that's been written for television considering the time and so on which has been spent on them."

Tell me, Andy. How did you land the gig?

"It so happened that someone I met at a party was quite influential in television . . ."

☐ CHRIS SALEWICZ

Lisbon 'rebels' are accused

By Our Correspondent in Lisbon

Two Right-wing Portuguese ex-officers captured in a monastery near Braga were interrogated by the military authorities yesterday. They are accused of being members of the E.L.P. . . . Portuguese

From *Sunday Telegraph; sent by JOE BAKER; Billericay.*

Don't put your daughter into Porn Mrs Worthington

Aggressive stage-struck mothers and their precocious little brats have plagued the entertainment business since John The Baptist lost his head over a showgirl named Salome.

Things eventually reached a peak when child stars like Shirley Temple and Judy Garland reigned supreme and filled every ambitious Mother's heart with hope and envy.

The era has long since passed when a parent needed to fork out a small fortune on vocal and dance tuition. Today, things have returned to more carnal qualifications: the legendary casting couch has been resprung and together with the telephone has regained its status as the most important piece of office equipment.

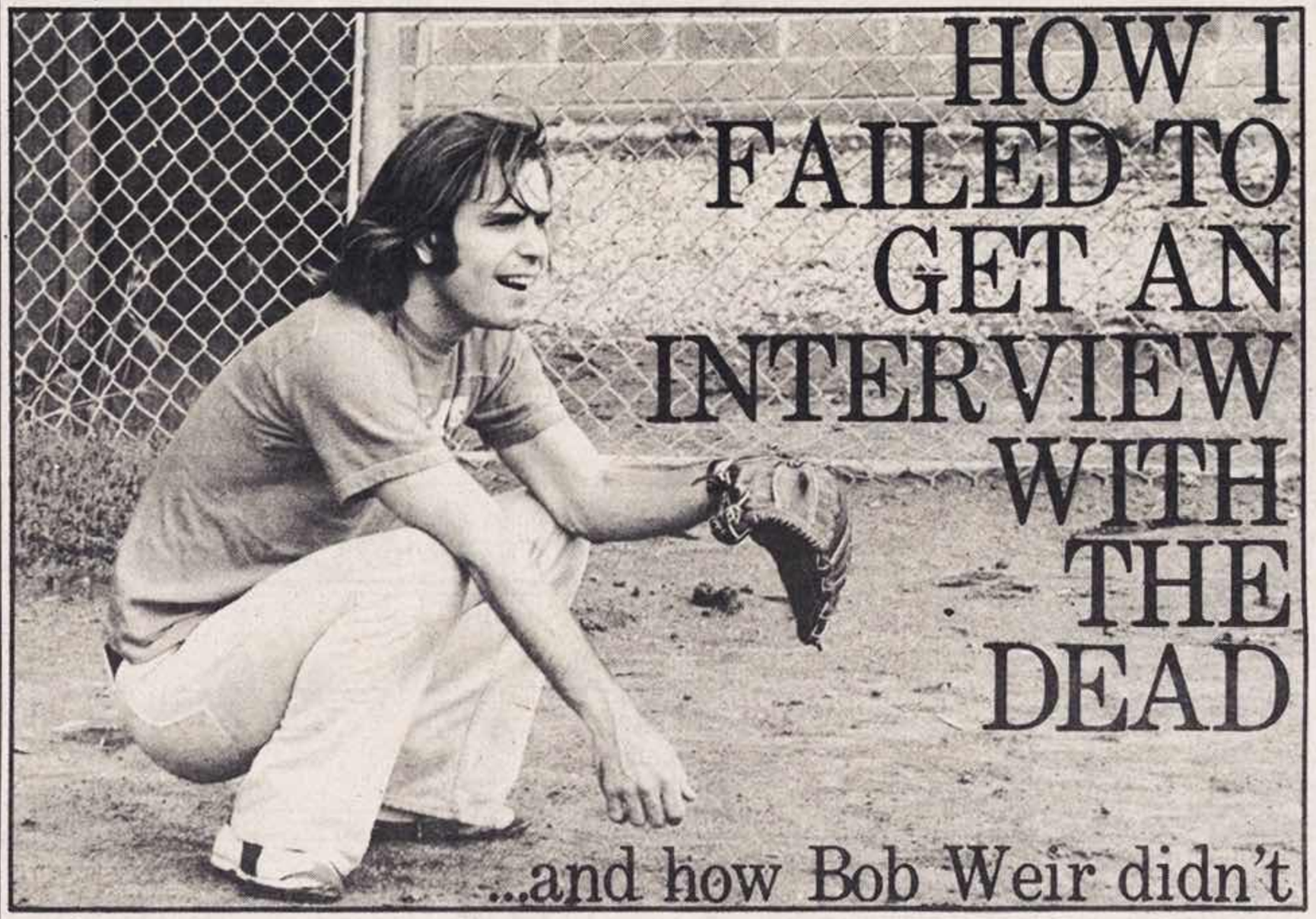
Over the last couple of years, the movie business has been over-run with a new breed of showbiz mum eager to push their daughters into the raunchiest of hard-core porn movies. If Linda Lovelace could do it, so could any chick who spends her time in the backseat of parked cars or trying to gatecrash rock stars' hotel rooms.

In Hollywood and New York, things have almost reached epidemic proportions with the outer-offices of shoe-string movie companies overflowing with little yummies and their mummies eager to "audition" for any part.

One producer reports that when he was trying to cast roles for a movie based on the Patty Hearst saga he lost 10lbs in one week. At presstime we were still trying to wipe the smile off his face.

■ ROY CARR

The "banjo hitter" relaxes. *Pic: BARRY LEVINE*



HOW I FAILED TO GET AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DEAD

...and how Bob Weir didn't get a home run

IF YOU think being a rock journalist is easy, try getting an interview with a group who might be called the Ungrateful Dead . . .

The Dead sepulchre themselves up in the frosty regions of suburban San Francisco, and rarely venture out of the vicinity in one piece anymore. Nearest you get is contact with blunt relics from the Dead corpus — like Bob Weir's Kingfish or Bob Garcia's Legion of Mary, or Phil Lesh's this or Keith and Donna Godchaux's that.

So an in-depth interview would be useful — to throw some light on whether as a total entity or in cold cut form, the Grateful Dead is worth even one while these days.

Of course, any hope for such conversation requires transport up to their home city. Fair enough. So this writer and a small entourage consisting of NME lensman Barry Levine and a rival British journalist we'll call A. M. duly set off for 'Frisco and the Drake Wilshire Hotel.

Next day, along with our United Artists PR lady, we climb into the car for the 'big interview'.

The plan is that we're going to be graced by the Grateful Dead playing together again — but not as musicians. Instead, they're allegedly challenging some winos from the next county in a dandy game of baseball. But when we get to the field, only Bob 'Ace' Weir has shown up, though there's also a regiment of roadies, old ladies, other assorted Dead ringers and some guy with a video tape camera who's going to show Bob how to improve his swing.

It's al very unfortunate. Barry Levine is looking for something to shatter. He hasn't lugged all his equipment on PSA death flight 369 to shoot just Weir. At least, not with a camera . . .

The U.A. PR lady seems on the verge of tears. This is certainly not the way it was planned.

A call to the Dead's private PR man, in an attempt to clear things up, provides little assistance.

"As far as I know, Bob Weir is still in bed," he says — while Weir is swinging bats right there in front of us.

The challenge of the interview itself is really something, because Weir insisted on playing his baseball game. At second base. So the only time I can even get near him is when his team is on offense (i.e. up at bat). As I made the futile effort of following him around with pad and pen I must have looked very much like a flunky taking his orders for sandwiches.

AND THERE were so many important areas to probe. After all, the Dead were spawned out of love town Haight-Ashbury in the late '60s, playing free for all love-ins and travelling around with the Acid Test Bus. While never scoring a top ten album or even a hit single, they could attract enormous crowds on the Pacific Coast, and even won the endorsement of the nefarious Hell's Angels motorcycle and concert ushers club.

Curiously, the biography from their new distribution company, United Artists, has the following lines in the official press bio: " — their music has made no compromise with commercialism for lo these many years. The Grateful Dead intends to change all that with their new album, "Blues For Allah."

That line alone could've provided several hours worth of interview interrogation. But alas, the household-word names of Garcia, drummer Kreutzmann, Lesh the bassman, and the "peripatetic" Mickey Hart as well as the Godchauxs were all back at the 'household' and weren't about to budge. Except for Weir, who was blazing on the basepads instead.

Actually, the album has some incredibly indigestible passages, and hardly seems to compromise with commercialism, though it does seem to compromise with inspiration. Once again, the most compelling aspect of it is the sleeve painting featuring Mr. Death.

Perhaps the famous (albeit secondhand) quote of Garcia might explain much of the album. "Music is my Yoga . . . practising and keeping my muscles together." Perhaps this is why all of side two sounds like the musical equivalent of a pulled groin muscle. But the title choice was clever. At least the Dead will never be placed on any Arab blacklists.

HOWEVER, BACK to the "interview". The only way to write it is to print it up as a box score. If you're not familiar with baseball, all you need to know is the object is to hit a ball and run to sand bags called bases. If you run to four bases before being tagged or put out, it scores one "run". Just remember the whole thing derives from cricket. An inning is a period where both teams play one round of offense and defense apiece. It is the American pastime. It is also an absolute bore.

FIRST INNING

Weir leads off the batting, of course. It's his ball and his band. He swings and misses three times and strikes out, a very dopey thing to do in baseball. Weir might be a guitar player, but in baseball parlance, he is in the category of a "banjo hitter", meaning a guy who would need a bat shaped like a banjo to even hit the ball. Soon Weir's side is out. He runs to play second base. The other team scores three runs.

SECOND INNING

Weir spends most of this inning grinning through a fence so the guy with the video tape camera can get in focus. "Maybe we'll make a baseball ballet out of this," he threatens. In a twinkling, Weir's team is out again, and once again the Ace assumes his defensive stance on second base. The other team scores 49 runs.

THIRD INNING

Weir finally comes over to where I'm standing. It starts to rain. Normally, this would conclude a baseball game. Instead, everyone on offense heads for the dug-out shelters but the game continues. I ask, "How come the Dead don't perform together much anymore?"

Weir answers, "Well —" and then one of the sycophants yells, "You're up again, Ace!" 'Ace' fouls out and heads for second base again. The other team scores 63 runs.

FOURTH INNING

Bob comes in and seems ready to talk. His answer to my previous question is "Well, it's hard to get it all together anymore. And the free concerts are a drag now. Too many people show up." Somebody yells out that some mud has to be shovelled in at first base to fill the puddle. Guess who runs for a shovel?

FIFTH INNING

I figure I'd better hit some of the heavy material this time. "Bob, why do a violent bunch of butchers like the Hell's Angels endorse the Grateful Dead?" Weir gets a dead serious look on his face and mumbles, "It was just a myth. I can't help what they like. I'd rather not talk about it." The side retires. The other team scores 42 times.

And I consider retiring from writing.

SIXTH INNING

Weir and several of his teammates give themselves a pep talk and finally manage to score. But not runs . . . Weir goes to bat and starts swinging weirdly as if he were hammering spikes into the ground. The other team scores 480 runs.

SEVENTH INNING

Usually known as the "stretch" inning, where spectators stand up and stretch. I corner Weir, who now has a slightly paranoid look in his eye, and ask him what the value is in splintering off into a group vastly inferior to the Dead. "If you've been playing with a band for 10 years, there are weak points, but you learn each other. You can all cover up the flaws. With a group like Kingfish, it's harder to cover up. That's very important."

If you follow this, playing in rock bands is simply the art of cosmetically hiding errors, something I've long suspected. Bob seems to enjoy Kingfish, one of the most flawed groups in the business today.

Weir's team takes defense, and proceeds to commit 17 fielding errors. They've stopped counting the other team's runs.

EIGHTH INNING

As to whether the Dead is planning to tour as the old group ever again, Weir says "No plans at the moment. In fact, we can't even all show up for a baseball game."

Really, Bob? No kiddin'!

I'm about to ask him if he's had any interesting anecdotes on the road when the side retires again. "I had a neat train ride through Canada with Janis Joplin," he yells as he heads for second. This inning is the most ridiculous yet. The winos are scoring at will. The only break in the action comes when one of their players twists a knee sliding into home plate.

I notice Weir is still wearing that silly smile out in the field. I volunteer to replace the casualty.

They laugh when I step up to the plate but — being left handed, it's easy to pull the ball to the opposite field and get a hit. The next batter moves me to second base, where I confront the slightly surprised Weir. "Now, what about that anecdote," I demand, whipping out my pad.

"Well, once I think one of our speakers blew up —" he starts but already the next batter has hit which means I've got to dash down to the next base. As it turns out, I run all the way to home base and don't stop until I'm halfway back to Los Angeles.

My conclusion from all this is that somebody should pull the plug from the iron lung respirator keeping the comatose Grateful Dead going, and finally put us all out of our respective miseries.

☐ STANN FINDELLE

1976 NME Readers' Poll

AND WELCOME back to "Democracy In Action." In ordinary language for plain folk like us and you, that means that once again it's NME Readers' Poll time. Which, in turn, means that it's your chance to Rearrange The Hierarchy and let all them top pop stars know who loves 'em (baby).

Yes indeedy — it's time for All Of You Fab Folks Out There In Readerland to stand up and be counted, so scramble into your chrono-synclastic infidibulum, roam back through 1975 and give credit (or debit) where credit (or debit) is due.

Reeeeee-member (and mark well, etc. etc.) that while Brit acts can show up in either the World or General sections, the Brit section is Ghetto-A-Go-Go and limited to persons originating from this sceptred isle Only. Foreigners are Right Out. Orright?

More Small Print: the "Turkey Of The Year" category replaces last year's "Klutz Of The Year" but the change is semantic only, i.e. (not to mention to wit) Musical Turkeys Only (if you know what we mean). Completion of all categories (some revised, some added since the last Poll) is not necessary, but — for the sake of accuracy — we'd appreciate your help in filling in as many categories as possible. And we'd like to point out that Best Jazz, Soul/Reggae and Country Act is not intended to bar these Acts from other categories.

Still More Small Print: only one coupon per reader.

The Editor's decision (however arbitrary or weird) is Final City and — most vital of all — the closing date for the whole megillah is JANUARY 19TH, 1976.

We'll repeat that. JANUARY 19TH 1976. Anything arriving after that date will be smoked, so be prompt. Remember, you're working to a deadline.

DO IT.
Vote, that is.
DO IT DO IT DO IT DO IT DO IT.

BRITISH SECTION

Male Singer

Female Singer

Group

Stage Band

Disc Jockey

Music TV Show

Music Radio Show

Most Promising New Name

WORLD SECTION

Male Singer

Group

Stage Band

Female Singer

Most Promising New Name

GENERAL SECTION

Guitarist

Keyboards

Miscellaneous Instrumentalist

Bass

Soul/Reggae Act

Drummer

Producer

Single

Best Jazz Act

Album

Best Folk Act

Best Dressed Album

Best Country Act

Turkey Of The Year

SEND TO POLL, NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS, 128 LONG ACRE, WC2E 9QH

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Age _____

Entries to be sent by January 19, 1976.

Pic Chalkie Davies

A stray burst of machine-gun fire accounts for the guitarist.

Gott in Himmel!!

Jerry's really bought himself a packet now! As the Fifth Albertos y Lost Trios Fusiliers harry their jackbooted fans through the Berlin Corridor, we bring you a shell-spattered report from TONY TYLER, staunch but quaking in the transmission hut. Let's see the Hun laugh this one off!!

DEEP DOWN UNDERNEATH the sleeting streets of Berlin, City of Intrigue, in a stone-lined bunker where candles gutter and dim lights flicker wildly in the chill draught, six desperate men huddle together in a pool of lamplight.

Alberto y Lost Trios Paranoias are not getting through.

Chris (C.P.) Lee unfolds a piece of paper from his pocket and reads a risque piece of Pidgin German to the audience, who huddle impassively over beer without response.

He reads some more.

Finally he jams the paper back in his pocket, rasps some mock-Bogart phraseology, slugs himself under the jaw, and plunges to the ground in endearing disarray.

The audience go crazy.

Subtle, these West Berliners. Humour of the obliquest. Say, could this faculty be the product of an upbringing entirely in a City Under Siege, a Lone Island of Democracy amid the enveloping Seas of Totalitarianism, where brick, barbed wire and minefields — not to mention watch-towers full of well-trained East German Grepos — divide the city in two?

Or could it be that the six strange Englishmen who keep falling over onstage are counting on an overly high command of English among their West Berlin patrons?

Mind you, the roadies behind the mixer keep laughing. All the time. Uproariously. So do the manager, Tour Manager and Guest Journalist seated at a prominent table.

So do the band.

But it's obvious that the uncomprehending audience and the consequently low overall Guffaw Count — not to mention the pitifully miniscule stage — are reaping a grim harvest of morale. And there is a further set to play.

Now is the time for Alberto y Lost Trios Paranoias to show their mettle.

"They're like a wall of cement" observes an Alberto, once within the dressing room. Pungent expletives and echoing groans mingle with the slurp of Mancunian tongues nosediving into foaming halflitres of Pils. Tour Manager and Manager (and Guest Journalist) look on with sympathy for the Albertos' predicament.

They have played 90% of their repertoire, to little or no real audience response — which is by no means to imply actual hostility. And now they are obliged, under semi-normal German nightclub procedure, to play a further 45-minute set, with no real prospect of a more stimulating reception than before — considerably worse, if anything, considering that a plurality of the clientele are certain to remain within the confines of the Eierschalle, due to the pocket blizzard which is building up outside, and thus to see virtually the same set all over again.

You might say England Stands Alone.

But they go on again without any real dismay, phlegmatic as good Mancunians can be under unpromising circumstances. At least, C.P. Lee goes out, on his own under the spotlight, still with his piece of paper. He reads a Germanoid gag. No response.

He reads the second. No response.

Then he reads the first again. There are chuckles from one or two quarters of the Eierschalle. He reads it a third time, slowly. Now the room heaves again. It's as if Lee has said "You vill *laff*! By *Order!*", and they begin to respond once they catch the note of command. Lee catches on, and by the time he's finished improvising and has cued the other Albertos for Silly Entrance the club is rocking with deep bellows of "Ho! Ho! Ho!"

The men laugh too.

One is proud to be British at a time like this.

SO WHO ARE Alberto y Lost Trios Paranoias. More to the point, are they really funny?

In fact they are, despite a precarious approach to their material (four rehearsals last year) which means that they are usually teetering on the brink of outright artistic collapse (to the onlooker at least.)

But Albertos have a deep and implicit faith in the improvisational abilities of C. P. Lee, Bob Harding and Jimmy Hibbert, the actual Trios Paranoias, especially Lee, who swerves wildly between comic genius and berserker over-indulgence from set to set, moment to moment. And often the sheer weight of good humour which emanates from the act overcomes its many presentational flaws to osmose a friendly response from audiences by dint of personality alone.

Many of the Albertos' gags are vivid nightmare humour, excruciatingly funny to start with, actually gaining in this quality with repetition and familiarity. The ludicrous back-up behaviour of Simon "Tommy" White (guitar, occasional bass, pedal steel), Tony Bowers (bass guitar), and Bruce Mitchell (drums) only imperfectly conceals their real abilities on these instruments. Altogether there is more than enough inventive comic ability for the Albertos to cut it on all the levels they want to.

If only one knew what these levels were.

A dispassionate observer, while awarding many points for warmth and energy — and for some joyously killer lyrics — can hardly avoid also reiterating a commonly-held opinion about the Albertos: that the enjoyment they themselves derive from their own performances, which in turn is a vital factor in the effectiveness of those performances, is itself obscuring the fact that they need to clean up their act in some small but vital areas. None of which alters their need to have large freedoms for the Trio (especially Lee) to perform on a purely spontaneous level.

Some gags should be dumped, others reinforced. More material needs to be integrated; success with one gag should not allow the (unappreciated) follow-up joke to pass unnoticed. What audiences actually laugh at should be noticed, and emphasised.

All this is called Tightening Up.

On the other hand, it would be a churl who could resist them when the stage is big enough, when Lee is on form, when the pace is deliberately held back just a trifle to allow time for a satisfactory delivery/response synapse, when the audience catcall back in the required manner; when they really *are* wickedly funny, often for minutes at a time, gag after gag.

This is what they produce in the Eierschalle, West Berlin, in the second set, with a four hundred kilometre drive behind them and the prospect of a further massive leg the following day, including all the dreary form-filling at Checkpoints Bravo and Alpha, which are at either end of the autobahn corridor through East Germany from Berlin to Helmstedt.

And then through Brunswick, and down a wintry road to Langelsheim, in the Harz Mountains, while the overcrowded VW Camper sways in the gale and nine matted heads sway with nausea in the VW Camper.

And so to this bland little Harz town, where hotels have hunting scenes and pitifully diminutive antler trophies on the walls, where the toilets have special ledges to counteract the uncomfortable splashes which result from the effect of German water and food on the English Large Intestine, and where midgets in knee-breeches cluster thickly around the lobby stairway.

Midgets in knee-breeches?

The midgets are dancers who accompany a Bavarian Band, wholesome and beefy tuba experts who play out-of-tune marches in national costume for all the best bourgeois civic functions in this land.

In their stately self-importance, the guests at the dance (which is being held in the hotel) are more absurd than the Albertos could ever be. But they're not in on the joke.

Mind you, their sons and daughters are different. 1967 has just come to the Harz — or there's perhaps some truth in the saying that German Jugend has progressed straight from Rockerdom to Freakdom without the intervening stage of Hippie Nirvana. Despite the long hair and groovy lights, despite "Mysterious Traveller" on the disco sound unit the kids of the Burghers of Langelsheim are a pretty vacant-eyed, spiritless bunch. Inert; like sausages in a packet.

How the hell can the Albertos cope? They've got yesterday's battle to fight all over again. This lot'll *never* understand the Albertos' high-speed Limey-speak.

But they do! *How* they understand is a tribute to the West German Educational System (Language Department) and to the utter demolition of any budding German Youth Culture in recent years by the bleary-eyed vaguely anarchistic influence of Anglo/American rock culture and the attendant and necessary grasp of Musicianspeak. Mind you, they have problems with the Manchester accent.

The gags are swiftly run through, whether daft tune or verbal link. To describe them would serve no purpose, but I will mention "Mandrax Sunset Variations" (which wholly numbers the Metalmusik so beloved of German audiences), Jimmy Hibbert's blues piece, and "Jesus Wept", where White plays sliding-in-the-chapel pedal steel and Harding delivers the words ("I used to smoke grass/peddle my ass/till I found Jesus"). Bowers operates throughout on a single manic nerve, intense vacant concentration combined with an unbelievably rigid posture, while Mitchell — certainly the most assured of all with the audiences, on or off the kit — plays what can only be described as immaculate drums on the worst kit I've ever seen.

The gig is great. That is, the usual holes and mini-untogethernesses are still there, but — once again — attack and a total lack of inhibition win over the blank stares.

The Albertos usually do good gigs. Nevertheless, there have been exceptions. Gigs where they weren't able to osmose, and had to fall back on their . . . organisation. Like at the Argent Circus at the Roundhouse a few months back.

They are quite bitter about Argent, and not only because of his absurd bare-chested stage persona, although it's exactly the kind of thing that drove them to parody musicians in the first place.

It's not in fact quite clear what they object to in the Argent Episode, but one feels that what with Support Band Hassles, Special Camera Calls for a Film That Was Never Made, and the general unfunniness of the occasion, The Albertos were stitched up by omission, as it were. Nothing to put your finger on. Just a crisis.

Of these they've had the normal number. Formed by Lee, Harding and Hibbert two years ago, Albertos hired two hippy musicians who degenerated and finally left. They acquired a PA by inviting the PA's two owners to join the group (in whatever capacity presented itself), and then, about a year and a half ago, took the massive step of blagging a London Agency while basing themselves in Manchester and environs. The hippies quit and Bowers and White, the PA's owners, stepped into the guitar seats. One of the two previous drummers also quit, more recently, badly demoralised on a personal level. Another early member is now in hospital with a severe illness, and is unlikely to return to performing.

They've done four tours of Holland, one gig in Copenhagen (where the VW Camper was broken into) and, at time of writing, four gigs in West Germany. They fill halls in England first time around, and in Europe second time. They have nearly finished their new album.

Money is short.

On every level except intelligence, they're a perfectly normal Struggling English Group.

But if they tighten up on the non-essentials, look at their own act with a more self-critical eye, and develop staid and unobtrusive professional virtues in order to underpin their easily-achieved inspired lunacy, then they could find their untidy but massively-endearing operation snowballing right off the stages of smaller European venues and into a different league altogether.

And them's my opinions.

Donner rather than blitzen from Sgt. Alberto

Pic: Joe Stevens

PLATTERS

Welcome to the first all-1976 NME of 1976 where the biggies are already swarming all over our albums section — and, by extension, your fave diskerie. 10 c.c. will be with you this Friday, Bob Dylan hits the racks on the 19th inst, and David Bowie and Emmylou Harris (don't they make a lovely *couple?) make their grand entrance on the 23rd.*

Vetting by NME's Quality Control Board, however, starts raht heah an' raht NOW!!!

DYLAN

Last tango in Durango

El Paso revisited

BOB DYLAN: Desire (CBS)

THE RECORD came into the office round about lunchtime. At approximately three-forty-five, I went into the review room, turned on the stereo and put on this new Bob Dylan album.

By four o'clock, at least three people had stuck their heads round the door and asked if it was any good.

I explained to them in a good-humoured manner that it was very hard to evaluate any record after only listening to the first few minutes; doubly hard to do so when the record in question was a brand new Bob Dylan album.

After listening to it for six hours now, I've got to confess that I'm still at something of a loss to answer the crucial question; "is it any good?"

It's easy to come up with an oblique response. Nobody's going to argue with you if you just look innocent and say that "Desire" is a very strange record.

It's also very possible to whip off some kind of shock statement: "Yeah, buddy, Dylan's gone Cajun". That usually shuts them up for a while. Oddly enough, it also happens to be just about true.

The only other alternative is to let your eyes glaze over with a look of insanity and mutter darkly that it's all part of Dylan's paranoid master plan.

I have a feeling that this is going to be one of the difficult Dylan albums, one of those that initially get dismissed as aberrant rubbish, and then slowly draw people back to discover whole other levels beneath the crass surface of the tracks.

Probably the best thing to do is to cut out any further speculation, and go through the tracks one at a time and look in some detail at what exactly we've got.

Side one opens with 8.33 of "Hurricane". A lot of you will have heard the import single of this by now, but for those who haven't, it's a brisk, dynamic outline of Dylan's current political cause celebre. With a tune that contains echoes of both "All Along The Watchtower" and "Frankie Lee And Judas Priest", it relates the framing of Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, a black world middle-weight boxing contender on a supposedly faked murder rap. A powerhouse rhythm section and funky fiddle make the cut a creditable, if lengthy start to the album.

"Isis" is more of a paradox. As the introduction gets under way, you could almost swear that it was a more ponderous and menacing version of "Winterlude".

This passes when the vocal starts. In just under seven minutes, Dylan unfolds a long, rambling and totally surreal story. He marries a lady called Isis, leaves her after a very short while and teams up with a guy he meets in a bar. They set off through what seems to be the worst blizzard in history to discover the pyramids in the middle of an icefield. After his partner has died, he returns to Isis and engages in some brittle conversation. If nothing else, the cut provides food for thought.

The duet's between Dylan's harmonica and Scarlet Rivera's violin produce an effect that only needs Clifton Cehnier playing the accordion to turn the whole thing into a late Saturday night on the bayou.

Emmy Lou Harris joins Dylan on the vocals of "Mozambique", and appears to have a good deal of trouble keeping up with the dubious pitch of the Master's Voice while they perform a peculiar travelogue calypso to a kind of Cajun stomp with chords that have all but been borrowed from "Substitute". (That's right. You did just read that.)

"One More Cup of Coffee" is the first of the album's two gunfighter ballads. It owes a good deal to the work Dylan did for the soundtrack of "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid". It could almost be a reworking of "Knocking On Heaven's Door", except that Dylan sees fit to affect a ludicrous, supposedly Mexican quaver, that not only makes him sound more like a demented Arab than Pancho Villa, but also causes Emmy Lou terrible problems as to where she can fit herself in on the choruses.

The most direct song on the whole album, and, in that respect, the most immediate is "Oh Sister". Depending on your viewpoint, it's either a somewhat austere love song, or a statement on the role of women in contemporary society. You have a choice.

It certainly causes Ms. Harris a great deal less pain to duet with Bobby on this one than it does to perform some of the tasks she's set throughout the course of the record.

It's only when you get to the second or third verse that things finally fall into place. The reason the melody is comfortingly familiar is that a thinly disguised adaptation of "Girl From The North Country" (or "Scarborough Fair" yet again, if you want to be pedantic).

There's nothing too comforting about "Joey", though. In fact, the track is just about inexplicable. At a leaden pace, and with a backing that includes gen-u-ine Eye-talian accordians and mandolins, Dylan recounts the saga of Joey Gallo, a New York Mafia chieftain whose death in the early '70s triggered a murderous real-life rerun of "The Godfather" right in the streets of New York.

There's no easy explanation of why Dylan should give this fairly recent Mafiosa the same kind of folk hero treatment that was bestowed on Pretty Boy Floyd by Woody Guthrie and on Jesse James and Robin Hood by countless anonymous traditional singers. The problem is made doubly complicated by the fact that Dylan takes a fraction over eleven minutes to complete the process.

"Romance In Durango" is the second gun fighter ballad. This one isn't based on Peckinpah. This little gem is pure, 100% Marty Robbins. It's "El Paso" revisited. There's a slaying in the cantina, and the hero is forced to flee the town, heading for Durango with his true love, the beautiful (and supposedly wicked) Magdelena. In the second to last verse he feels a terrible pain and know's that he's been shot down. He's got one verse to bid Magdelena goodbye, and, with gypsy violins and a lilting accordion, he really makes a meal of it.

From the people who brought you "Lily Rosemary and The Jack of Hearts" comes another surreal drama of Love, Death and Deceit. It's called "Black Diamond Buy". This time the set has moved from the archetypal western town to some kind of Bond/Bogart Mediterranean exotic night. The cast is made up of Greeks, midgets and a Bianca Jagger figure in Panama hat and tie.

Fortunately, after seven and a half minutes, the volcano erupts and the whole place sinks into the sea, leaving Dylan sitting in L.A. watching the whole thing on the Walter Croakite T.V. news.

There's something very doubtful about the final track "Sara". At first glance, it would seem to be Dylan totally exposed. The song, is, after all, explicitly written about his wife, and surely that should be the time when he gets down and finally commits himself to coming out from behind the double talk and produce something of real power.

Instead, we are presented with a succession of sickly sentimental images; children playing on the sand, Sara standing in the snow, etc., while Scarlet Rivera saw's away as though she were working a cheap Hungarian restaurant.

The whole thing is strung together with a bunch of gratuitous, gossipy and probably phoney indiscretions that peak with the lines:

"Staying up for days in the Chelsea Hotel,
Writing 'Sad Eyed Lady Of The Lowlands' for you."

There comes a point about halfway through the track when it all starts to sound empty. The only conclusion that the listener can come to is that once again he or she is being put on. It as though Dylan's pathological self-concealment has slipped down to another level.

I guess this feeling permeates the whole album. That's what makes it so hard to sum up in a couple of handy phrases.

The best thing to do in a case like this is to leave it to you to decide. "Desire" is there(or will be there on January 16) for you to argue over, analyse or ignore.

The thing that's absolutely certain is that it's a weird one. The weirdness even extends into the songwriting credits. On everything but "One More Cup Of Coffee" and "Sara", he shares the honours with Jaques Levy. Levy, by all accounts, has co-written a number of songs with Roger McGuinn, the most successful being "Chestnut Mare." He doesn't seem to have been a great deal of help to Dylan, however. This album may get by in the long run on its strangeness but there's no mistaking that it's definitely inferior to "Blood On The Tracks.

For me, this is enough to make it a major disappointment. I thought we'd seen the last of Dylan being cute at the expense of his music. It seems however, that the games still go on.

It's a dirty rotten shame.

Mick Farren

ACE: Time For Another (Anchor)

JUDGING BY the cover of this new album from Ace (their second) these guys are determined that their new-found "stardom" — even in America — isn't going to make them forgetful of their Northern working-class roots.

Which is fine by me if they don't get boring . . . and I don't think they do, I hasten to add. In fact they could have pushed it a lot further than they do.

When I first heard "How Long" I was sure it was an American group.

And the overall sound of this new LP is also American, fluid spacey phasing on a lot of the guitar and keyboard work, and easy-rolling rhythm, some of the numbers in fact sounding very Allman-ish, particularly as one of the singers at least has got that "adenoidal" twang, and Alan King's "This Is What You Find" closely resembles the Allmans' little classic "Blue Sky" in sound and feel.

That spacey sound is all-important on this album. There is little agression, though the more up-tempo stuff is highly danceable as well as listenable.

Lyrically the album is not as individual as their first and could have been written by a number of bands (both here and in the States) — which contrasts strongly with material like "Rock And Roll Runaway" on the former. Still, there is none of the mindless repetition of morale-boosting soul-slogans and grunted "Don't-you-knows" which has become the hallmark of many funk outfits over the last couple of years.

Paul Carrack is still the boss when it comes to composition, although I think it's Tex Comer's "Tongue Tied" which stands out most this time, and it should have been chanced as a single, rather than the group-composed "Ain't Gonna Stand For This No More" which, like the other group composition "I'm A Man" is jolly disco fare possibly, but undistinguished amongst all the other competition on the airwaves at the moment.

This is rock with its head down.

Their material is generally characterised by a sort of dogged pessimism (though not cynicism) mixed with a determination to still be around when things look brighter — which is a kind of optimism, n'est-ce pas? (Answers on postcard, please).

This apparent "don't-expect-too-much" position of theirs seems quite realistic in our present economic climate where cutbacks in the musicbiz tend to mean that you've either got to be superstars or nowhere at all, leaving no room for bands that are merely good, or even very good.

I hope they get bigger in the States — and if that means they have to become tax-exiles, then good luck to them and no hard feelings at all.

Geoff Hill

THE EDGAR WINTER GROUP WITH RICK DERRINGER (Blue Sky)

I'M AFRAID that I've just been deflated again by music which isn't bad because it's not well played or produced or even because it's weak in terms to material. It's just annoyingly facile.

Within the space of half an hour or so, the listener is subjected to Sly Stone/Kool and The Gang type funk (you can't always tell the difference these days), Todd Rungren balladry, heavy rock of near-Zeppelin proportions and even one number which sounds as if they're lampooning "Number Nine Dream"-vintage Lennon.

All the various bits are well played and well produced (Derringer being the guy at the board here), but it's all so superficial and feelingless it smacks of rich Americans experimenting with various rock forms just for the sake of it.

Moreover, everything comes across on the same level because of Derringer's immaculate (by purely technical criteria) production.

The whole thing bored and depressed me.

Steve Clarke

Praise Todd and

TODD RUNDGREN'S UTOPIA: Another Live (Bearsville)

POOR OLD TODD'S taken a lot of stick of late, not least in this paper, for adhering to his mystical mind games in the face of sceptical/critical reviews.

At least the kid's trying though, and filtering through the hogwash this second live album (recorded on his last August US tour) represents both his palatable and questionable profiles with remarkable panache.

Side One is all new material.

The macrobiotic feedback laughs are fast and furious with this guy and "Another Life" shows he's still hellbent on polarising attitudes. Here's one of his stoical rhapsodies a la "It Wouldn't Have Made Any Difference."

Excellent production and presentation with Ralph Shuckett and Roger Powell soloing their respective organ and trumpet moves while the Runt spirals off into some nouveau '70's, white boy soul routine.

"The Wheel" will remind you of "Initiation" 's more farcical moments.

An unusual acoustic spin fronts the kind of lyrics that Melanie Safka would think twice about singing. Get past the cornball mysticism and there's Powell blowing a hauntingly beautiful distant trumpet part and Moogy Klingman, Todd's longest serving accomplice, tinkling an effective glockenspiel.

The audience clap along in mostly the wrong places and Todd warbles a superbly embarrassing Al Green-style vocal improvisation. All good clean fun.

We get another of Rundgren's obscurely simple world solutions on "The Seven Rays." There are sections of his most inventive electronic weeping since the "Todd" double, the powerhouse sextet overkill assault is a speciality of the house and it works a treat.

As Pete Erskine suggested in his October review of Utopia, this particular bunch not only sound like a band, they're nearly always shifting towards new ground.

Side two begins with Todd and Powell pitting their wits against the marvels of modern technology on "Intro/Mister Triscuits".

Pretty tedious on record because it relies too much on those animated sound armaments that were left over from "Awats", although it probably creased them in the front stalls.

Bernstein and Sondheim's "Something's Coming" is a recent addition to the set and stops short enough of being a tacky period piece to become

PLATTERS

BOWIE

Don't touch that dial

DAVID BOWIE: Station To Station (RCA)

"A sixty thousand word novel is one image corrected fifty-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine times" — Samuel R. Delaney

LONGACRE BOARD OF EXAMINATION INTERMEDIATE ROCK WRITING

Discuss David Bowie's "Station To Station" from any perspective available. Up to two hours may be spent on this question. You may answer in note form if necessary.

1. IT MAY be argued that there is a qualitative difference between music made out of necessity (i.e. to fulfil a contractual quota) and music made purely for the sake of enjoyment derived from making it.

David Bowie didn't have to make this album.

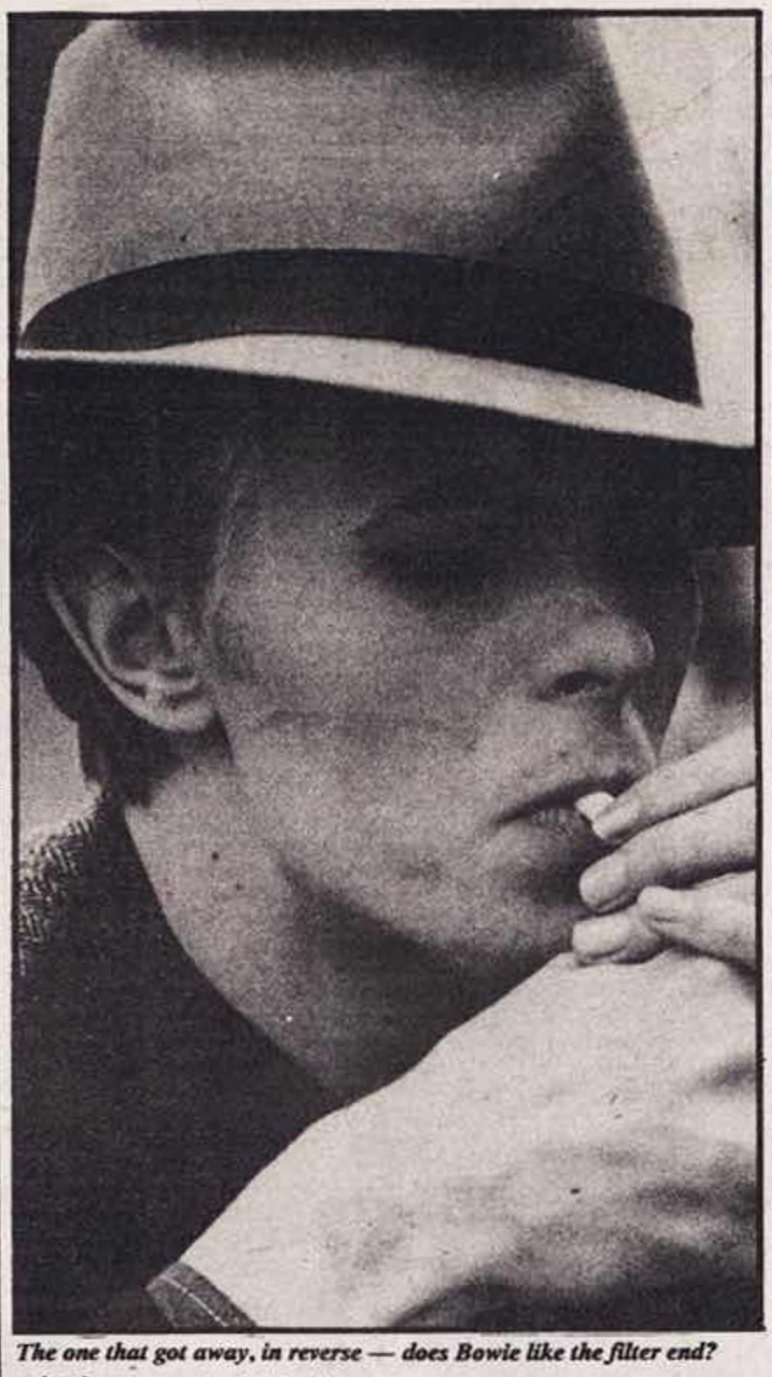
After completing his work on the movie soundtrack of "The Man Who Fell To Earth", he was supposed to take a holiday until the New Year (this one, *putzo*) when he was/is scheduled to go into rehearsal for the European tour and, presumably, the next U.S. tour.

However, he ended up writing a batch of songs and flying his band into L.A. from New York to go into the studio and make this; an "extra" bonus album, if you like. Kind of like "The One That Got Away" in reverse.

2. The album opens with the sound of mighty trains chuffing determinedly from speaker to speaker (must be a *real trip* in quad, Jim), heavily phased to suggest ("allude to" would be more precise) the ambience of the white noise you get when you twist a radio or TV dial attempting to local a channel. (Not to mention "station-to-station" (as opposed to "person-to-person") long-distance phone calls).

3. The title song, which opens the album, runs 10.08 (at least, that's what is says on the label. I haven't checked it). Bowie doesn't make his vocal entry until the track is nearly three and a half minutes.

4. If Bowie was James Brown he could well have entitled the second, up-tempo half of "Station To Station" "Diamond Dogs '76". The dominant sound of this album overdubs the claustrophobic guitar-strangling garage band chording of "Dogs" (plus, to a lesser extent, the howling, wrenching lead guitar of "The Man Who Sold The World") over the itchy-disco rhythms of the "Young Americans" album, while Bowie's vocals evoke the lugubrious, heavily melodramatic vibratoed almost-crooning of Scott Walker.



The one that got away, in reverse — does Bowie like the filter end?

5. "Golden Years," the album's Big Single, is placed in the middle of the first side. The placing of an already-familiar single on an album of otherwise new material is always crucial, since it automatically provides a period of decompression, a relaxing of the concentration necessary to assimilate new music.

"Golden Years" is a masterstroke of a single (though not quite in the same exalted class as the masterly "Fame") and it's quite the most compact and direct piece on the album.

Elsewhere, Bowie lays out vocally for quite considerable lengths of time — particularly on the title track's companion Marathon, "Stay", which can be located over on the second side — leaving the band to cook uninterrupted.

His vocals are not only sparse, but mixed *right down* and mumbled into the bargain.

In the days when I was into lyric sheets (i.e. before I remembered that Dylan never provided a lyric sheet in his life, and realised that a crucial part of my enjoyment of "Horses" was down to listening to the words as *part of the record* and comprehending/understanding/deciphering more of them with each listen instead of copping the whole thing off a dessicated cribsheets)I would have bitched about not being able to do the heavy lyrical analysis *schtick* straight off.

As it is, I find myself listening to the sounds of the music (and the music of the sounds, man, far out!) rather than even *trying* to make out the lyrics.

On a purely audio basis, therefore, "Station To Station" represents a solid triumph for Bowie as an organiser of music. Maybe if I had the sleeve I'd know whether it was a concept album (heh!) or not. Hope it isn't, though.

6. MUSICALLY, THE biggest surprise on the album is the intro to "TVC 15," the first track on the second side.

It's rolling bar-room piano (vaguely reminiscent of Climax's "Loosen Up") with Bowie copping the "Oh-woa-hoo-wo-ho" vocal intro from the Yardbirds' "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" (the man is nothing if not eclectic) before settling into a tight but relaxed groove with a great chorus in which Bowie carols, *"Transition/transmission"*. It's one of the craziest things I've heard in a long while.

Incidentally, I have no idea of what the title means. My theory (which is my own, etc., etc.) is that it refers to Channel 15 on Los Angeles TV, but on the other hand Joe Stevens suggests that it's the register number of the video course that Bowie's supposed to be taking at U.C.L.A., while Mick Farren opines that it's a gearbox of some sort (alternate meaning to the "transmission" motif).

To coin a phrase, I await further enlightment.

7. "Stay" features a lurching raunch guitar part performed, or so Mr. Kent informs me, by Ron Wood.

It confirms my belief that the standard of Mr. Wood's playing is entirely determined by the company he keeps, a belief initially fostered by a comparison of his playing at Eric Clapton's Rainbow Concert and on Rod Stewart's sole albums (sublime) and on the vast majority of Faces manifestations (ridiculous), not to mention a brief earful of a recent Stones bootleg.

Here he gets plenty of room to smear funk all over the scenery, ably supported by Willie Weeks on bass (and presumably therefore Andy Newmark on drums).

Bowie's vocal line, embellished by female back-up voices singing octaves, is quite absurdly effete — not to mention loopily wacky a la Sparks — but it seems almost logical when juxtaposed with Wood's funk riffs.

Since I'm working from a blank sleeve with no info, I can give you no exciting tidbits about the world-famous musicians, engineers, producers, arrangers, derangers, freerangers and so forth who are doubtless embroiled in the proceedings.

I can hazard a guess, though, that Tony Visconti is present in some productorial capacity and Paul Buckmaster in an arrangerial ditto, whereas the other musicians are simply whoever was in Bowie's road band at the time, with another Carlos Alomar or Earl Slick (or both) on guitars. The more Ronsonesque guitar leads on the album are certainly reminiscent of Slick's work on the live album.

8. In addition to he abovementioned songs, the album also includes two real croonaruskies on which Bowie — and this is Ian Mac's idea, not mine, Dave ol' pal (heh heh) so don't git mad — sounds totally drunk.

Dig the scenario — the bar's closed, the proprietor's sweeping the floor and stacking the chairs up on the tables with their legs in the air like abandoned mannequins, and this turd in the corner just won't stop singing along to the backing track in his head.

More so than anywhere else on the album, Bowie discards the conventional tradition of rock singing (i.e. non-realistic, purporting o be a stylisation/abstraction?) of the wya the singer "normally" speaks and by extension therefore *is*) in favour of an abstraction of the styles of the so-called "Balladeers".

Both these songs are placed at the end of their respective sides; "Word On A Wing" comes at the end of side one, while "Wild Is The Wind" ends side two.

The latter was written by Toimkin and Washington (the only non-Bowie song); Tiomkin is presumably Dimitri of the Ilk, and is therefore, equally presumably, a theme-from-the-movie-of-the-same-name.

9. The main lyrical motif of the title song is "It's too late (to be grateful)/It's too late (to be hateful)".

10. "Station to Station" is a great dance album.

It's funk on the edge, the almost claustrophobic rhyhms of "Fame" diffused through the tortured guitars of Ziggy's memory tapes, plus that new vocal style, simultaneously ugly and mesmeric.

11. Let's hear it for the title guy in the baggy suit.

Charles Shaar Murray

pass the synthesiser

Boogie, boogie, boogie!

an astonishingly tailor-made Toddism.

It forms a nice antidote to the hard stuff that follows.

The real blitz grits come with "Heavy Metal Kids" and Rundgren tuning up for the rock'n'roll war that aint happened yet.

Considering that Todd risks a lot when he offers his all to the assembled multitudes I think we'll have to put him down as one of the committed few with sufficient brains, naivete and, above all, credibility to make '76 their year. He deserves some breaks.

To finish you got a version of The Move's "Do Ya" that surpasses the original.

Sounds like a bunch of kids let loose on the meanest, loudest equipment that Long Island provides and there's a synthesiser solo that is remarkably psychedelic in a restrained sort of George Martin way.

It's actually better than the rather muddy and obligatory "Just One Victory" provided here, if not normally such a natural climax.

All in all it must have been a great concert.

When he stays rooted to ground control Todd is frequently one of rock's more intriguing figures. When he takes off and almost blows the entire ball game I reckon he still runs a lot of his contemporaries into oblivion.

Max Bell

PRETTY THINGS: Savage Eye (Swansong)

BACK IN THE mid-60's they were possibly the prototype punk band playing raucous tinny proletarian R'n B fronted by a lead singer (Phil May) who was uglier and more objectionable even than Jagger.

May carried the band through the 60's (and the 70's) and the Pretty Things survived.

That's what this album is all about. Not so much lyrically — (although obsessions like Vietnam, James Dean, suicide and acid all get a namecheck) but more musically: the return of the spunky riff, the wimpy but attractive ballad, group vocal harmonies, manic guitarwork, piano chord progressions and punk lead singing-sincere, but often flat, unnecessarily anguished, just that little bit out-of-control.

And it never sounds contrived, deliberately "clever" like, say, 10cc, or even merely nostalgic.

It's all as good as new folks . . . better, almost.

Actually it must be about time for a '60's sound update to swamp the market after more than a decade of '50's rock 'n' roll retreads.

"Savage Eye" has the necessary: memorable riffs (particularly "Under The Volcano" and "Remember That Boy"); memorable ballads and arrangements ("My Song" and "It's Been So Long"); and a killer closing track, "Drowned Man". It passes the Old Grey Whistle Test.

The only concessions to '70's sophistication are in the band's now excellent playing and in Norman Smith's crystal clear production . . . but that's progress for you.

I wish the Stones had kept as well.

Jonathan Barnett

HOT TUNA: Yellow Fever (Grunt)

THIS ALBUM is an exercise in musical archaeology.

Just as you can find groups of incredibly ancient musicians still playing Dixie as it had originally been taught them by Barney Bigard, we have here one of the few surviving heavy-metal psychedelic groups.

They play at maximum volume with little perceptible change in dynamics throughout. They have obviously been frozen in time somewhere around the period of Cream's double album.

If they ever unthaw the ice which keeps Jorma Kaukonen trapped in 1968, then we should all be mighty pleased because he's not a bad guitarist and can be an excellent vocalist.

On an album like this there's nothing for his vocal chords to wrap themselves round. The whole affair is terribly lightweight. His guitar is set at maximum fuzz and distortion so we can't even hear what subtle tricks his fingers were up to for the pumping of the wah-wah pedal.

It's terrible to have to put down a Hot Tuna album when Jefferson Starship's "Red Octopus" is having so much success.

Part of the trouble is that noone ever really thought of Hot Tuna as a real group until it was too late. By the time it finally sank in that the old Jefferson Airplane we all knew and loved was never going to re-assemble, Hot Tuna had already passed their prime.

To be fair, if this album was by anyone else it would be pretty damned good, but Casady and Kaukonen are capable of so very much better.

Hopefully the rumours that they have both shaved their heads and become Jesus freaks are untrue and that instead they will get down to some hard work and produce the album that we all know they are capable of: something of great surface simplicity, but with intelligent lyrics and giving a proper vehicle for those knife-edged bell-toned guitar notes of old.

Miles

PLATTERS

10C.C. Ennui old iron

"I'm Kevin — fly me"

10cc: How Dare You! (Mercury)

"WITH EXTENSIVE critical acclaim to their credit and a succession of hits to their name, 10cc well deserve the accolade 'Superstars'." — record company press release.

"Superstar" is a euphemism for that final ascent to rock 'n' roll heaven — the result of a specialised form of alchemy in which fans transform themselves into "freaks" for their band ("10cc freak, Burnley") while the band is rendered as some kind of giant-sized sacred cow.

We, of course, become "so-called critics".

I therefore suspect that if 10cc have become "superstars" then this new album of theirs will be greeted with universal critical fanfares and turn out to be their best-seller yet.

But will it be on the strength of its real, intrinsic contents, or as a result of the cumulative effect of their past track record?

This is the sort of question "superstars" have to ask themselves every day of the week.

One of the advantages/disadvantages about becoming a "superstar" is that people stop looking too closely at your work because a) they are frightened to disagree with the majority, and b) they start feeling paranoid that their initial investment/commitment might turn out to have been misguided.

The Business, for example, has, and will always be, loth to make sudden about-turns; similarly, punters in this country have little cash for gambling on the works of unfamiliar artists — hence they often prefer to follow only one or two bands exclusively.

If either of these turns out the occasional dog they will therefore make damn sure that they find *something* they like about it, even if it's only the sleeve art.

It might actually be very pleasant to be an artist in this position — to be able to sit back and know that your work is being purchased almost on conditioned-reflex.

But the temptation to take liberties, to develop a cynical attitude to your audience and want to play little games with their gullibility must be very great.

More than that, this kind of "freedom" has to be damaging to the development of your art because you have nothing left to strive for.

It is, after all, a truism that an artist's best work is often produced under strict discipline and duress.

Not that 10cc are in that position yet.

But, on the evidence of the contents of "How Dare You!" the results of their having been over-indulged by both press and public (as the pioneers of intelligent, satirical pop) are beginning to show.

"HOW DARE YOU!" is quite astonishingly insubstantial.

Musically, there is nothing comparable to "I'm Not In Love"; lyrically there is nothing as "witty" and nimble as "Life Is A Minestrone".

Whatever happened to the kind of intelligence that produced a track like "Speed Kills"?

Having said that, I also acknowledge that comparisons are unfair.

But, on any terms this album appears to be an unloved prefab job assembled by a group of musicians with little feeling for their music beyond a preoccupation with sound quality (and *even* that isn't as fully exploited here) and even less for each other.

One does not expect a "warm", endearingly human album from 10cc, but it does come as a surprise to be confronted with something as perfunctory as this.

I can only think to attribute this to the damaging effects of the kid glove treatment they seem to have received since changing record companies — and, perhaps to a certain overconfidence as a result of "I'm Not In Love".

I mean, is it really such a good thing to spend over three months recording an album?

The album opens with the title track, "How Dare You!" which is epochal because it is 10cc's first instrumental.

It might be best described as 1984 factory music — the sound of massed cybernauts at their workbenches. The most one can say for it is that it's cleanly executed. Essentially a filler, though.

"Lazy Ways" sets the musical mood for the rest of the album — a vague reprise of the atmosphere of "I'm Not In Love"; itself a reprise of the atmosphere of the Beach Boys' "Feel Flows".

Lyrically it is an expansion of the idea proposed by one of the characters in "Catch-22" — that one can extend one's life span by cultivating boredom:

"You get less done but, more out of your days".

"I Wanna Rule The World" takes the form of — again — a kind of cybernetic chant made more eerie through simple use of synthesised electric piano. However,

"I wanna be a boss/ I wanna be a big boss/I wanna boss the world around/I wanna be the biggest boss that ever bossed the world around"

— does not constitute profound social commentary to me. Nor do the lines:

"Gimme the readys/Gimme the cash/Gimme a bullet/ Gimme a smash"

(in "Art For Art's Sake") — which are no more "perceptive" about "greed" than the Floyd's "Money" lyrics.

In any case, The Last Poets, will never be surpassed as the masters of the form used for "I Wanna Rule The World".

Aside from this, the dramatic impact of "I Wanna Rule The World" is greatly diminished by the group's apparent inability to keep things simple — something they threw out between "Sheet Music" and "The Original Soundtrack".

I am greatly disappointed to see them reverting to the old lamebrain impress-a-crowd technique of incorporating 2,000 chord changes a minute.

At times they almost sound as if they're trying to re-record Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody".

It does, however, feature A JOKE:

"I get confused, so confused /I get a pain, I get a pain up here/In the Shirley Temples".

The perfunctory 10cc pun.

"I'm Mandy, Fly Me" seems similarly pointless apart from representing that same preoccupation with Sounding Important by tearing off the aforementioned blitz of chord changes.

"ICEBERG" ATTEMPTS to poke fun at platitudes in the same vein as "Life Is A Minestrone", except that Minestrone is replaced by Iceberg.

Really, it's so tedious I can't think of much else to say. Depressing too.

There is, however, a fine Eric Stewart guitar solo closing an extended version of the single "Art For Art's Sake" which opens side two.

"'Head Room'," says the press release, "looks at a young man's first encounter with sex."

With the same kind of consciousness and dependence on dreary innuendo that pervaded Procol's "Souvenir Of London".

Simply crass — like the lyrics of "Iceberg" which conclude:

"There's really not a lot that you can do/And I might be back for sloppy seconds".

What's *that* about?

Presumably the same tired schoolboy humour inherent in the lines

"Dumb waiters waiting sweating straining/All mass-debating my woman".

— of "Don't Hang Up", which, thankfully, close the album.

The most insidious thing about the whole 10cc approach — which I wouldn't mind if they could retain their initial high standards — is that it's infectious.

At a time when, more than ever, we're desperately in need of a return to simplicity, naivete, boy-girl lyrics and a Good Guitar Sound, 10cc are busy spawning mind-rot like "18 With A Bullet" and "Bohemian Rhapsody".

Give me "No Milk Today" any time.

Pete Erskine

Lyrics by permission St. Anne's Music Ltd.

CHRIS FARLOWE: Out Of Time — The Best Of Chris Farlowe (Immediate)

IT WAS while Chris Farlowe was bucking for a hernia as he shouldered his way through a carbon copy of the Otis Redding arrangement of "Satisfaction" which Mick Jagger, Keith Richard and Andrew Oldham produced for him that I got that sinking feeling.

See, this album has the ultimo star-studded production credit plague.

Nearly half of it was produced by Mick Jagger (either on his tod or with Keef 'n' Andrew sitting in) and most of the rest of it was overseen by Michael D'Abo, Steve Marriott and Ronnie Lane.

Among the clusters of "classics" (of varying merit, it must be admitted) like "Out Of Time", "Handbags And Gladrags" and a whole multiplicity of Stones songs, there are also hideous misconceptions like the aforementioned "Satisfaction" and — *glurrrrrp* — "Reach Out I'll Be There."

What seems to have been happening was that Marriott, Jagger *et al* had a manic desire to produce Real Soul Records (just like all them big bad bros in Memphis and the Mo'tuh Citteh), seeing as how Farlowe could do a fairly respectable spade imitation by the standards of the time, he got to be the guinea pig. Sort of blackface-by-proxy.

Despite the superb juxtaposition of Farlowe's florid lead with Jagger's laconic vocal backup on "Think", the hi-spots of this little scrapbook are "Handbags And Gladrags" (later covered by Rod Stewart on "An Old Raincoat Will Never Let You Down", with a rather constipated French horn replacing the rainynight/street-corner mouth harp of Farlowe's original) and Bobby Timmons' and Jon Hendricks' "Moanin'" with a beautifully gravelly bass and some hilariously absurd and totally irrelevant electric sitar intrusions.

For the record: Chris Farlowe's best-ever recorded moment was the version of T-Bone Walker's "Stormy Monday Blues" that he cut under the pseudonym of Little Joe Cook way back in the dawn of the '60s.

File under my-producers-are-white-but-my-vinyl-is-black.

Charles Shaar Murray

Wrecked again again

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: Pleasures Of The Street (Nova, Import)

IF I WAS Michael Chapman, I'd not only be bearded, balding and an infinitely better guitar player than I am right now, but I'd also be fair-to-moderately pissed off.

For a start, I'd be pissed off that this album was only available on import because Decca apparently didn't have the faith in either the artist or the product to give it a British release.

I'd be further pissed off because the reason that they gave was that "Pleasures Of The Street" 's predecessor, the excellent "Deal Gone Down" met with such a disappointing reception (notwithstanding the fact that it might conceivably have done better if Decca had released it to coincide with a brief tour that Chapman had undertaken with an excellent band comprising Keef Hartley (drums), Rod Clements (bass) and Professor Sutton (guitar) and had promoted it with even the faintest amount of enthusiasm).

Plus I'd be ultimately pissed off because it wasn't even worthwhile for Mr. Chapman to work live dates in this country with the kind of band that shows him off at his best.

As it happens, I'm not Michael Chapman (surprise!) but I'm pissed off anyway, not least because the way things are going, hardly any of the people who'd be most likely to dig this album will ever get to hear it, just like they didn't get to hear "Deal Gone Down" or any of the five excellent albums which preceded it.

The dourness of Chapman's work combined with the uneasy course he steers between the Scylla of gritty, understated, throwaway funk and the Charybdis of acoustic folkery means that adherents of the one strain of his music are put off by the presence in his work of the other, while his unwillingness to play either rock star or folk poet has rendered Da Biz unsure of how to promote him.

Maybe he should make a concept album.

Instead, he's made a live album, recorded during a European tour last summer.

On three of the eight songs he performs solo, while on the others he's backed up by Stefi Stefan (bass), Achim Reichel (guitar), and the quietly heroic Hartley, with an overdubbed guest appearance on one track by the noteworthy Hull guitarist Professor Sutton (regarded by the natives, incidentally, as the hottest guitarist to emerge from that fair city since Mick Ronson, himself a graduate of the Chapman Academy).

The material is drawn from the last few years of Chapman's output; "Wrecked Again" providing "Time Enough To Spare", "Shuffleboat River Farewell" and the title song, "Window" spawning "In The Valley" and "Among The Trees", and "Millstone Grit" donating "Firewater Dreams", while "Party Pieces" and "Deal Gone Down" emanate, logically enough, from "Deal Gone Down."

As an added bonus, the version of "Shuffleboat River Farewell" included here is set to the arrangement of "The Banjo Song" (a track from "Deal Gone Down"), while "Wrecked Again" — a truly epic song, by the way — achieves far greater stature when shorn of the ponderous Paul Buckmaster string arrangement that marred the original studio version, and the "Memphis Soul Stew" enter-one-by-one intro of "Time Enough To Spare" is an unalloyed delight.

Chapman is a terse and laconic lyricist and singer with a voice and phrasing vaguely reminiscent of Randy Newman — he mumbles his words and bites them off grudgingly, swallows them rather than let them pass his lips, a fierce and spiky

PLATTERS

Hello EMMYLOU goodbye heart

Emmylou who had a heart, lots of feeling, and some of the best sidemen in the business.

EMMYLOU HARRIS: Elite Hotel (Reprise)

EMMYLOU HARRIS puzzles me. Normally I find country music nigh on unlistenable, even though I get off on what's commonly categorised as country-rock.

But Emmylou I *can* listen to — and perhaps that's an indication of how good she is; her own excellence brings out the best in those who work with her, so that it doesn't matter whether she's singing country music or not.

Because there's nothing on here which can be called country-rock, with the possible exception of side one's closing "Till I Gain Control Again", possibly the album's strongest cut, written by Rodney Crowell, rhythm guitarist with Ms Harris's band.

But categories are hardly important; what is important is whether or not the music moves the listener, and this album should certainly do that because Emmylou Harris has a voice so intensely charged with emotion that it's hard to ignore her.

Just listen to her version of The Beatles' "Here There And Everywhere" which is a masterpiece however you look at it — and makes up for her disappointing reading of that other great "Revolver" song "For No One" (which was included on her previous, debut, album "Pieces Of The Sky").

If anything, Emmylou has gone in for a much more simple approach instrumentally on this album, and the sensitive arrangements are deceptively spare, highlighting her compelling vocals all the more.

The Lennon-McCartney song is a perfect example of this. It is beautifully arranged and magically played, everything is set around Emmylou's voice, so that her singing is so very intimate.

It's as if she's singing just for you.

Technically her voice isn't that great. It's not particularly strong and she doesn't have a wide range. Sometimes her phrasing leaves a lot to be desired, but when she sings a song it's as if her everything depended on it.

I mean, she's good.

Along with "Here there And Everywhere" and the Crowell song, possibly country-rock by dint of the drumming which is definitely rock drumming even if it isn't Jim Gordon-studio heavy, there are three other exceptional cuts, "Satan's Jewel Crown", the Flying Burritos' number "Sin City" and "Feelin' Single — Seein' Double".

"Satan's Jewel Crown" has no writer's credit, so presumably it's a traditional number. Throughout this album the arrangements and playing are inspired, but here a particularly exceptional standard is reached, Ms Harris's voice sheaved in-between some great dobro and acoustic guitar playing.

Like the Gram Parsons-Chris Hillman song "Sin City", "Satna's Jewel" has an interesting lyric about the devil's temptarions, something that (figuratively speaking) saw the undoing of the late GP.

"Sin City" itself is a better song than the other Burritos' number, "Wheels" which closes the album, although there's nothing lame anywhere here, though I have a personal distaste for the ubiquitous Hank Williams' number "Jambalaya".

It is one of side two's three live cuts, all of which are so well recorded you don't realise they're live until the applause comes in.

The brisk Parsons-Rick Gretch song "Las Vegas" is the first of these three. Previously recorded live on Parsons' excellent "Grevious Angel", on which Ms Harris shared the vocal credits, there could be a case for its exclusion here, though it merits inclusion because of the excellent standard of playing.

Guitarist James Burton and pianist Glenn D. Hardin are superb throughout, playing with an ease others would find impossible.

But then working with Emmylou Harris must be one hell of a source of inspiration.

Whatever your feeling about country music, if you have any affection for music of any kind, you must love this album.

Steve Clarke

electric guitarist and by contrast a florid and romantic acoustic stylist.

His subject matter is loss and desertion, but where Rod Stewart depicts the prodigal on his way home to end his troubles, Chapman's traveller is stranded in a barren and unforgiving landscape with no succour at all when he finally gets home.

I'd hate to have to calculate the number of times that "Deal Gone Down" or "Fully Qualified Survivor" (the latter, incidentally, featuring Chapman flanked by the not inconsiderable team of Mick Ronson and Rick Kemp as his sidemen) have gotten me through long, weird nights on the edge of something.

The point is that Michael Chapman's deal hasn't gone down yet.

Even though the rock audience has throttled by benign indifference as many major talents as it has nurtured by its support and acclaim, it's just possible that if a few people take the trouble to seek out "Pleasures Of The Street" (or, for that matter, one of its excellent predecessors), then at least Chapman may be able to get his records released in his home country and afford to pay a full-time three-piece band.

Which ain't really that much to ask.

After all, wouldn't you feel a schmuck if he went to the States and got famous and you wouldn't even be able to say that you saw him when he was poor? **Charles Shaar Murray**

THE CHRIS FARLOWE BAND: Live (Polydor)

CHRIS FARLOWE never really made it big back in the Sixties, despite a number one hit with the Stones' "Out Of Time", but the Polydor Newssheet warns us to expect him back this time as a Superstar.

So, before we all join in with a chorus of "You're obsolete, my baby, my poor discarded baby . . ."

The tracks were recorded by the Manor Mobile Unit at two gigs last summer at the Marquee and the Lyceum with a session band of impeccable musical pedigree which includes the likes of Pat Donaldson and Gerry Conway on bass and drums, the ubiquitous Madeline Bell, the "Gonzales" horns, and the deservedly legendary Albert Lee on guitar.

And despite all the perils that live recording is heir to, the band turn out a fine ballsy set throughout.

As for the man himself . . . I find the singing rather bellowy and sometimes even raucous, which doesn't bode well for a "come-back" album.

This can hardly be blamed on having to compete with the band, who play with sensitivity as well as the aforementioned cojones.

Rather I think that it shows that Chris Farlowe *has* been off the road for a few years and maybe that he needs time to get back into this new band. You can't expect to get very far on the first few dates.

Why am I making excuses for him?

Well, on past performance he has cut a few fine tracks — particularly in the studio with Andrew Oldham in the Immediate days — so I reckon he needs time to relax in a studio with a decent producer. And some good material.

It's a pity he doesn't write his own — a fact which must surely detract still further from his Superstar potential these days.

This album includes among others, a couple of funky Stevie Wonder work-outs, a run-of-the-mill Billy Preston number of the Get-Down-And-Get-With-It genre, a couple of lyrically undistinguished Albert Lee originals, and that saga of marital sado-masochism — the operatic (soap) "Only Women Bleed" which penetrated our green-grey fog-bound reality-starved airwaves some time last year (courtesy of the incomparably vulgar Alice Cooper) and almost seemed real for several seconds.

Geoff Hill

Chris Farlow has a double representation on the albums pages this week. The review of his re-issued '60's work on Immediate can be located on col. 5, opposite; and the review of his new Polydor album is due North of here — there just wasn't the space to run them together, y'see . . .

QUICK Before They Vanish

SINGLES OVERVIEW

The worst is yet to come

AND IN THE singles charts dated Tuesday, January 6, 1976, we have **Greg (Lake** not Allman) at 5, **Dana** at 9, **Chris Hill** at 19 and the **Judge** at 29.

The sound of Christmas lingers late in singles land.

Perhaps more to the point we have **Chubby Checker's "Let's Twist Again",** as the number two single in the country, (and thereby threatening the Habitat Catalogue sound of **Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody".** Assemble the parts yourself in the convenience of your own brain), **the Laurel and Hardy** thing at 3, **Demis Roussos** at 6, **Andy Fairweather Low** at 8, **Mike Oldfield** at 16 (another Habitatty sound) and **Bill Howard** at 20 with **Ken** and **Frank** bringing up the rear.

Which are all the Christmas sound by proxy on account of their appropriate seasonableness.

Jetaway from it all with Demis, singalong to the pub juke box with Andy, jig and reel to Oldfield's electric folk, chuckle uproariously to "King Of The Cops" (with hilarious results) and dream those late yuletide blues away with Ken and Frank.

More to the point, however, is that these twelve little beauties are, I suspect, not just Christmas novelties but are the sound of Depression Rock, and thereby the Sound Of '76.

Let's take a look at the charts for January 7,1975.

Only five Christmas/seasonal records there — Mud, The Wombles, the Goodies, Showaddywaddy, and Jane Birkin.

Now a year ago not only had the country yet to fall into the state of dark gloom in which 1975 slurped into 1976, but this was also still that innocent age before massive TV advertising made such anachronisms as **Perry Como, Peters and Lee, James Last** and — that cuddly bowl of moussaka again — **Demis** into puzzling chart biggies to be reckoned with.

And who's buying them?

Well, I happen to have a useful contact in these TV advertising circles, and I Have Been Given The Facts. The Silent Majority is now in charge of the album charts, that's who.

Cuddly bowl of moussaka . . .

The horrifically kitsch ads for all this product has not only uncovered a record buying silent majority, but these record buyers are *new* record buyers, apparently.

Only now, it is said, have these buyers of kitsch compilation albums discovered the joys of regularly purchasing lumps of vinyl.

And, logically, I reckon the Silent Majority has made the cross over from albums into the singles market.

And I also suspect — quite reasonably, I'm sure — that there is a direct correlation between a lack of kitsch compilations on the market and the amount of kitsch *singles* in the singles charts. In other words when they've bought all the albums they've been told to buy the radios get turned on and anything that approximates the bilgerama they've been scarfing up in album form gets scarfed up in 45 form.

Why else should Demis get that huge radio ad campaign for that horrific single?

Now the depression rock theory isn't just limited to these records all possessing three and a bit minutes of heavy ultra-bland escapism.

The Stylistics' ad — and I'll bet it's the same for Peters and Lee and all the others — was only screened in the London area by error in the first place, apparently.

Granada and similar points out of the capital were the areas that got ITV viewers saturated with the idea that playing a Stylistics album would get them laid.

The pleasantly elitist reason that was handed to me was that — as many have believed for centuries — those in the North are, in marketing terms, believed to be considerably more gullible than those . . . umm . . . elsewhere.

Scampi and chips . . .

And, of course, the most down areas in the country unemploymentwise, as they say, coincide quite handily with those areas of the country that provide the richest picking for the TV ad men.

Yes, kids, as we've been hinting for some months now rock! pop music in the Seventies certainly is the equivalent of Hollywood in the thirties but not so much in terms of the outrageous wealth being thrown about on ligging — though that's true too — as in the churning out of sheer escapism.

And, just as I figure that the economy is only just beginning to seriously get into the idea of taking a severe downslide, I also figure that the charts is going to get a lot, lot worse, although if some enterprising record executive catches on quick that the sorrows and miseries of **Tammy Wynette** et Country al are nothing more than upmarket Peters And Lee and markets accordingly we may get a flood of Nashville-produced cornball occupying the singles charts.

Which would still be preferable to Laurel and Hardy or Demis.

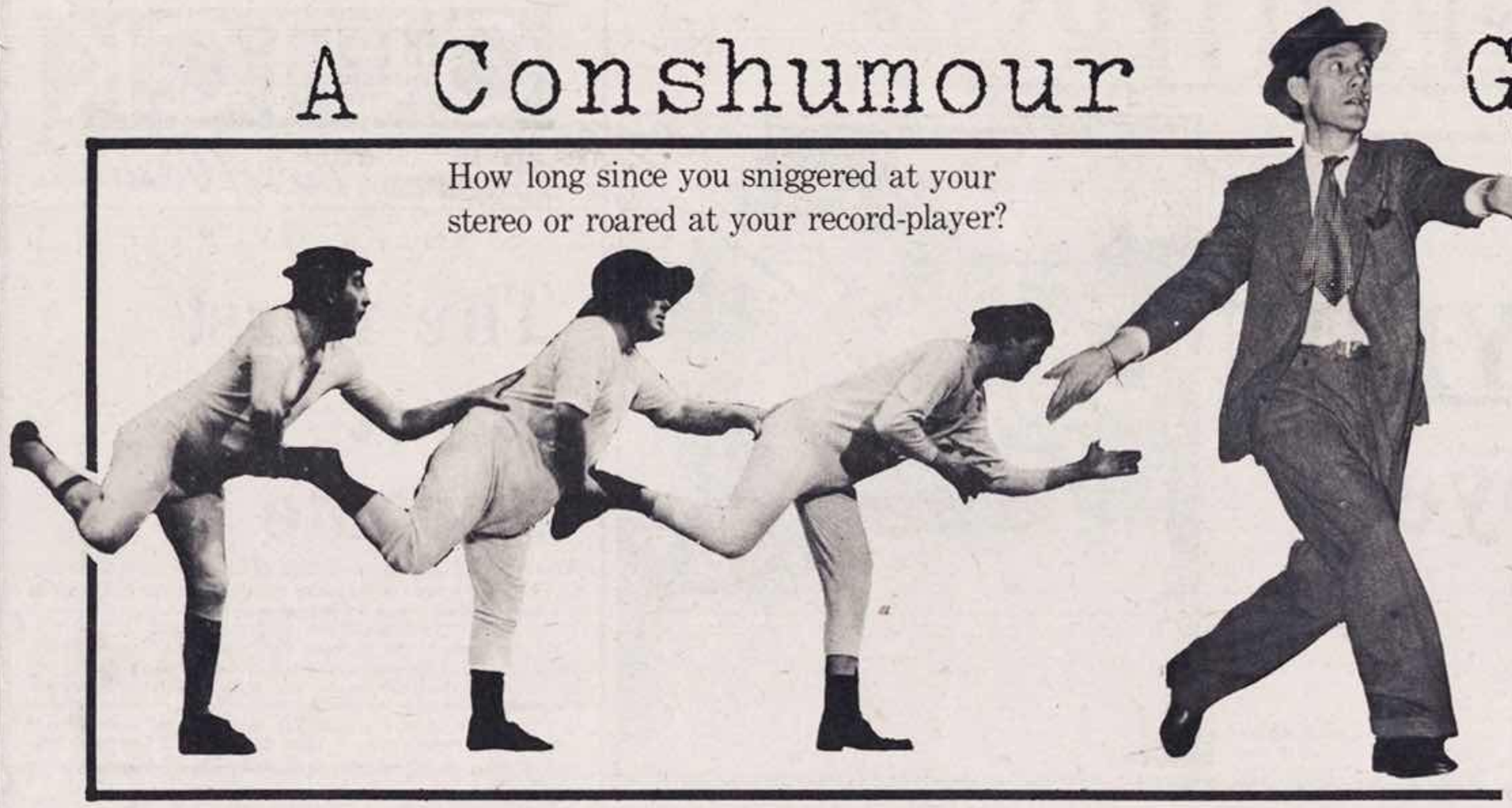
And which might even be more preferable than sitting around and discussing whether Abba really is quintessential MOR-pop or whether the Americans have got it wrong.

Preserve your paranoia. You know it makes sense.

CHRIS SALEWICZ

A Conshumour Guide

How long since you sniggered at your stereo or roared at your record-player?



NEIL INNES

"LAUGHTER is part of the human survival kit, a sticking-plaster on the wounds of existence." — DAVID NATHAN, *"The Laughtermakers"*.
"I THINK that when a situation is overwhelmingly serious the only thing to do is laugh." — GRAHAM GREENE

THE FOLLOWING guide is restricted (a) to artists I was reasonably sure would appeal to a rock-orientated market (hence no Hancock, no Morecambe and Wise, no W. C. Fields, etc.), (b) to artists I was reasonably sure (to the best of my knowledge, etc.) were the best of this genre . . . except, in some cases, where the very "worstness" of the artist shows that he needs to be brought to the public's attention and (c) to albums which, by legal means, I could somehow obtain.

Billy Connolly has deliberately not been covered both because of his recent heavy coverage and because it's not yet possible to see where he belongs in the pattern of things. Also deliberately neglected are purely musical-comedy acts such as The Barron Knights, Tom Lehrer, Dr. Hook, etc.

Other omissions could well just be victims of the editorial pen as, at the end of a few weeks of research, I discovered there were far more comedy albums than I'd at first visualised (especially on the American market).

My collection of funny records now stands at over 80 but even this doesn't represent the total output of the 25 or more artists that I've covered. Some records may have been deleted or some only available in the U.S. Whichever way, I've tried to restrict my comments to the work I've actually heard. This doesn't claim to be an exhaustive guide.

Those interested in a more than cursory guide to the world of comedy are advised to acquire two books.

The Laughtermakers by David Nathan (Peter Owen, 1971) covers the development of British comedy since the last war, with extensive coverage given to The Goons, *Beyond The Fringe* and the writing teams of Galton/Simpson and Muir/Norden. There are excellent interviews with all those discussed.

The Last Laugh by Phil Berger (Wm. Morrow & Co. Inc., 1975) concentrates on the stand-up comics of the U.S. following the tradition from post-war artists such as Henny Youngman an Milton Berle through Lenny and Woody right up to Jimmy Walker, Robert Klein and finally Freddie Prinze.

Perhaps the major difference between British and American comedy traditions is that whereas the Americans are products of the coffee house the British are products of the theatre. As a consequence there are no British equivalents to the likes of George Carlin or Robert Klein, who are so much a part of the rock ethos that they frequently tour as opening acts for bands.

Our own stand-up tradition (e.g., Monkhouse, Trinder, Cooper or the younger acts featured in Granada TV's *The Comedians)* are far removed from the thought and social perception needed to fill such a role.

Instead, the acts most likely to captivate rock audiences in Britain (i.e., Milligan, Python, Grimms), although not dealing in "issues" or "criticisms" also escape the "take my wife . . ." school of laughter by receiving their stimulation from the theatre — particularly the absurd drama of N. F. Simpson, Pinter, etc.

The only Americans to follow this trend seem to be Mike Nichols and Elaine May and the National Lampoon (who occasionally stage their productions). The Firesign Theatre on the other hand are something else altogether having developed themselves as a radio experience rather than a live or TV experience.

And so, without further explanation . . . to Britain . . .

THE GOONS

Surreal in its perceptions, anarchic in its structure and mischievously disrespectful in its tone, *The Goon Show* (BBC radio) directly contrasted the straight-thinking, discipline and pomposity that was Britain's heritage during and directly after the War. If the Goons' humour was ever directed at anyone, it was at the heroic figures of our disintegrating Empire — the explorer, the Army Officer, the ex-public schoolboy . . . or at any form of pomposity, including the BBC's own stiffened upperlip.

But, most innovatory of all, the humour was built upon tackling logic and language rather than on the traditional radio comedy use of everyday situations (e.g., *ITMA* and *Take It From Here* — The Goons' immediate predecessors).

The shows were hardly ever "about" anything although an exploding shirt tail, a batter pudding hurler or the theft of Number Ten Downing Street may well have provided the inspiration for the script. Essentially they were vehicles for the imagination, where all restraints of normal thinking were left behind. True escapism, in fact.

The Goon shows began on May 28, 1951 (year of the Festival of Britain), and ended on January 28, 1960, with 26 shows being broadcast each year.

Their influence has been considerable, expanding the possibilities of humour and shaping the joking of a generation. On a professional level *Monty Python* and *The Goodies* are the most recent acknowledgements of the Goons' power in changing the direction of British comedy.

Fortunately the Goons quit while they were still on top and have only once returned (for the BBC's 50th Anniversary celebrations). At the time of their retirement there were six shows ready for broadcast which even Milligan admits were "too far out."

David Nathan, author of *The Laughtermakers,* describes the unbroadcast shows as "Macabre and doom-laden . . . The spirits are more wild than high and the laughter is nil."

Following the writing of these and the end of the Goon shows, Milligan suffered five consecutive breakdowns. "The Goon Show did it," he says. "That's why they were so good. Eight in the morning till 12 at night — that was the slog. So the end of it was disaster."

The Goon Show recordings are divided between BBC Records and EMI. Of the BBC records, "The Last Goon Show Of All" (1972) and "Michael Parkinson Meets The Goons" (1972) are well worth a miss.

"The Last Show . . ." illustrates why it's not a good idea to re-unite legendary acts after 12 years of separation. It becomes a Goon Show parody at times, wanders over territory best left to Morecambe and Wise and, in order to cover two sides with one show, contains music by Ray Ellington and even the warm-up session the Goons employed to loosen themselves up before taking to the air.

"Parkinson . . .", to be truthful, only features Sellers and Secombe — Milligan's part being a recorded insert, and there are only one or two memorable anecdotes.

Of the EMI releases at least "Goon But Not Forgotten", "Goon Again" and "The Very Best Of The Goons I" are worth buying. Each features two excellent examples of the Goons' shows.

None of the post-Goon recordings by the trio really match up to their earlier excellence, although "The Best Of Sellers" does have its moments ("Party Politcal Speech" and "Balham, Gateway To The South" for instance). Sellers really needed the stimulus of a studio audience to make the whole recording work.

Milligan, writer of almost all the Goon Shows, continues to fulfil the definition of a genius as being someone capable of moments of extreme brilliance contrasted with moments of dire rubbish. Listening to "Spike Milligan With Jeremy Taylor", for instance, it's easy to see that audiences laugh at him merely for who he is rather than for what he does.

This lack of discrimination is hardly helpful to Spike himself and his recent TV series *Q6* shows him to be badly in need of supervision. Perhaps it was the discipline of his fellow Goons and a radio producer that really shaped the potential of *The Goon Shows.*

ALBUMS

"Goon Show Classics" (BBC Records REB 177). "Michael Parkinson Meets The Goons" (BBC Records REB 165 M). "Goon Show Classics, Vol. 2" (BBC Records REB 213). "The Last Goon Show Of All" (BBC Records reb 142 S). "Goon But Not Forgotten" (EMI PMC 7037). "Goon Again" (EMI PMC 7062). "The Best Of The Goon Shows" (EMI PMC 1108). "The Best Of The Goon Shows, No. 2" (EMI PMC 1129). "The Very Best Of The Goons — I" (EMI EMC 3062). "First Men On The Goon" (EMI PMC 7132). "The Best Of Sellers" (EMI Starline MRS 5157). "Spike Milligan With Jeremy Taylor" (Double) (Spark SRLD 3001).

PETER COOK AND DUDLEY MOORE

The Goon Show finished its nine year run in January 1960 and in August the same year Alan Bennett, Jonathan Miller, Peter Cook and Dudley Moore took a revue entitled *Beyond The Fringe* to the Edinburgh Festival.

This marked another turn in British comedy (later to be tagged "the satire boom") which went on to spawn such mini-monsters as the Establishment Club in Soho (Lenny Bruce's only British gig), *Private Eye* magazine and the TV show *That Was The Week That Was* with its front-man David Frost.

Before *Beyond The Fringe* most graduate or undergraduate revues started with the idea "Wouldn't it be funny if . . ." but the innovation of Fringe was to start with the idea "Isn't it funny that . . .", going on to highlight "Clear-cut idiosyncrasies and follies" (Jonathan Miller's words) in contemporary society.

At the time censorship was still in existence in the theatre and so Fringe's references to the Queen and Harold McMillan were, at best, a testing of the prevailing rules.

Many of the sketches are tied into the time they were written — a time when the memory of war was still strong, the bomb was a threat constantly in mind and the Church was worth a knock — but Alan Bennett's preacher in "Take A Pew" and Peter Cook's miner who would have been a judge in "Sitting On The Bench" remain classics.

Following the success of Fringe both in London and New York, Miller and Bennett returned to the theatre in producing and writing roles, leaving Cook and Moore to carry on the comedy tradition with their TV series *Not Only . . . But Also.*

It was here that the characters "Pete" and "Dud" developed — Dud, a short untidy figure full of undigested knowledge who looked up to Pete, a tall untidy figure full of undigested knowledge.

It marked a deliberate break from the more serious satirical tone of Fringe but nevertheless went on to make its points indirectly.

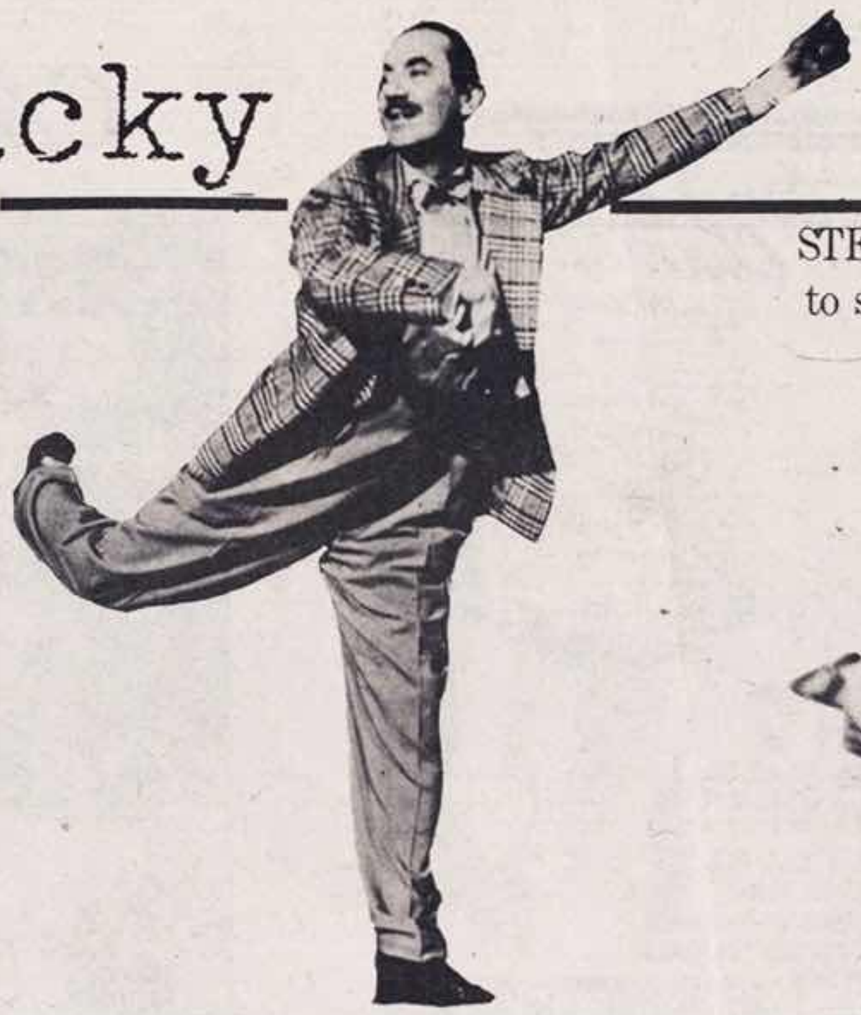
Two albums resulted from this period, the best of which is "Not Only Peter Cook But Also Dudley Moore" containing Pete 'n' Dud-type discussions on art, religion and superstitions plus other sketches not involving these characters.

The formations of "Pete" are to be found on "The Misty Mr Wisty" (1965), a collection of pieces that Cook did on *The Braden Beat* TV programme in '64. Mr Wisty, in raincoat and trilby sitting on a park bench, rel-

NEIL INNES of GRIMMS ex-Bonzos

JOHN GORMAN of GRIMMS with lady wrestler

To Wacky Waxings



STEVE TURNER goes ape in the archives to sort out the jokers from the jerks

ated his views on subjects ranging from world domination to the Royal corgis.

The duo's most recent stage show *Behind The Fridge*, opened in London during 1972 and went on to Broadway and finally Los Angeles under the title *Good Evening*.

An album of the Broadway show is available on import and is worth buying for "One Leg Too Few" (involving a one legged actor auditioning for the role of Tarzan — perhaps one of their best sketches), "Hello" and "Gospel Truth".

Unlike Fringe, *Behind The Fridge* does not attempt to aim barbs at contemporary attitudes. As Cook himself has said: "What sacred cows are there left to knock! I don't think there's a single one left. Probably the last of them was Sir Francis Chichester. An attack on Sir Francis Chichester might still be regarded as outrageous."

And so, ultimately, the ground won by comedy in the '60s was also ground lost because humour does rely a lot on certain values being fairly universal and some areas of life retaining sanctity.

ALBUMS

"The Misty Mr Wisty", Peter Cook (Decca LK 4722), "The World Of Pete & Dud" (Decca PA 311), "Not Only Peter Cook ... But Also Dudley Moore" (Decca LKM 4703), "Beyond The Fridge" — Broadway Cast (Capitol SW 1792), "Good Evening" (Broadway Cast) Island ILPS 9298).

The humour of what was to become *Monty Python's Flying Circus* first gained itself an ear through TV's *The Frost Report* with scripts being written by John Cleese, Terry Jones, Grahame Chapman (Python), Tim Brook-Taylor, Bill Oddie (Goodies) and Tony Hendra (National Lampoon) ... among others.

Sketches such as "Matter Of Taste", "Top Of The Form" and "Adventure" on the 1966 album "The Frost Report On Britain" are pure Python. Unfortunately Frost's own ramblings seem rather dated and obnoxious now and require the gentle lift of the needle to make them bearable.

Along with *I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again* and *At Last The 1948 Show*, the Frost Report sketches prepared the British mind for the coming of Monty Python in 1969. Still amazingly funny is the album of *At Last The 1948 Show* (1967) featuring Cleese, Chapman, Brooke-Taylor, Aimi McDonald and Marty Feldman. Faced with an audience not so well educated in Pytho-realism the scripts were far more controlled and rooted in actual observations than later Monty Python.

The team's first album, "Monty Python's Flying Circus" (1970) still rates as one of their best. More suited to the medium of an album than their later attempts, it features two of their best known sketches — "Nudge Nudge" and "Pet Shop" — both of which are only bettered on the "Live At Drury Lane" album (1974), possibly their best release yet.

I must admit that there are tracks on "Drury Lane" which I play again and again as I would a piece of music — simply for the effect they produce. And there aren't many comedy albums you can say that about.

Python's obvious problem is one of translating visual Goonery onto record. Just as much of the Goons humour depended on stretching aural logic (words and sounds), most of Python's humour depends on stretching visual logic and parodies of things we've learned to accept visually.

Many of the sketches on "Another Monty Python Record", "Monty Python's Previous Record" and "Matching Tie And Handkerchief" are only fully effective if you've seen the TV series.

Their biggest danger at present, a danger well illustrated by the record of "Monty Python And The Holy Grail", lies in out-Pythoning themselves. Once effective devices, when over-employed, just bring on premature sterility.

At present the Python's power to sustain is very much in question. The album of the film soundtrack could well be titled "And Now For Something Completely The Same." They'd do well to return to their record players and listen to "At Last The 1948 Show" — to remind themselves from whence they came.

ALBUMS

"The Frost Report On Britain" (EMI PMC 7005), "At Last The 1948 Show" (Pye MPL 1898), "I'm Sorry, I'll Read That Again" (EMI PMC 7024), "Monty Python's Flying Circus" (BBC REB 73M), "Another Monty Python Record" (Charisma CAS 1049), "Monty Python's Previous Record" (Charisma CAS 1063), "Matching Tie And Handkerchief" (Charisma CAS 1080), "Monty Python Live At Drury Lane" (Charisma CLASS 4), "The Album Of ... The Holy Grail" (Charisma CAS 1103).

ROUND THE HORNE

First presented in 1965, *Round The Horne* was possibly the most successful radio comedy in the age of television. Held together by Kenneth Horne and featuring Kenneth Williams, Hugh Paddick, Betty Marsden and Bill Pertwee, the series acted as a showcase for the writing talents of Barry Took and Marty Feldman.

Feldman, a former art student, poet and jazz musician, entered comedy via a variety trio, Morris, Marty and Mitch, and in fact met his co-writer Took through an argument about their respective billings at the York Empire. Together they went on to write for *Educating Archie, Take It From Here* and *Bootsie And Snudge* before originating *Round The Horne*.

Horne himself played the part of a sane anchor man reading his surreal narrative in a serious BBC monotone which wouldn't be out of place on *The World At One*.

Producer John Simmonds suggests in the sleevenotes to "The Best Of Round The Horne" (BBC Records, 1975) that it was this very air of respectability that prevented the show from being labelled as "outrageous".

Outrageous the show certainly tried to be as Simmonds infers. The majority of the material raised its laughs from sexual double-entendres, innuendos and ambiguities from Rambling Syd Rumpos cordwangle to Betty Marsden's *"many times, many many times"* and the implicit but again unspoken homosexuality of Julian and Sandy.

Through dealing in double-entendre the Horne shows by-passed the BBC's rigorous censorship while at the same time conjuring up the most explicit sexual scenes in the minds of listeners.

"The Best Of Round The Horne" is the only available record of the shows although Kenneth Williams does have a "Best Of Rambling Syd Rumpo" album (wisely recorded live) which produces a smirk until you realise that his songs are basically the same old joke re-cycled and that there are only three or four parts of the human body worth double-entendre-ing anyway.

Excerpts from both *Round The Horne* and *Marty* are available on a Pye album "Golden Hour Of Comedy" together with some Frost and Milligan. Particularly outstanding are the tracks from "Marty" which somehow over-shadow his work on *Round The Horne* and make you wish he was still producing his own TV series.

ALBUMS

"Golden Hour Of Comedy" (Pye GH 530), "The Best Of Rambling Syd Rumpo" (Starline SRS 5034), "The Best Of Round The Horne" (BBC REH 193).

THE BONZO DOG BAND/SCAFFOLD/GRIMMS

It wasn't until the mid-60s that rock music began to form the pivot of a much wider culture. And into this culture were to come poets, writers, actors and comedians who saw their audience as being the same as that for Cream and the Stones. So, somewhat logically, they saw that their optimum outlet was in shared concerts with rock bands, and album releases rather than TV and radio.

The Bonzo Dog Dooh Dah Band, Scaffold and The Liverpool Scene were the beginnings of this move and today it's Grimms, a fusion of these three acts, that continues the tradition.

The Bonzo Dog Band (they dropped the Dooh Dah quite early on) formed in 1966 from a collection of art school students, specialised in a combination of rock parodies, '20s tunes and highlighted absurdities. As a band they actually made it to a TV series *(Do Not Adjust Your Set* — with two Pythons included) and Viv Stanshall continues to crop up in various guises on TV, radio and stage.

In retrospect the albums seem patchy — not quite musical enough for good listening value and yet not devoted enough to humour for good laughing value. However, they produced many classics in their genre — "Intro And Outro", "Canyons Of Your Mind", "Can Blue Men Sing The Whites" and "Big Shot" to name but four.

Fortunately these and other best tracks are to be found on "The History Of The Bonzos", a double album containing 35 tracks.

Neil Innes, former Bonzo guitarist and composer of songs for Python's "Holy Grail" film is now a member of Grimms — the poetry, song and satire troupe. His speciality is in sending up the rock-biz but, after a while, this can be too introspective, especially for those not involved in the machine he's sending up. His Dylan parody is good, though, and all his work is well thought-out and disciplined.

With Grimms the accent is definitely on comedy — McGough's poems, Innes' songs, and, most outstandingly, the clowning of John Gorman. But again, facing the problem that most of these music 'n' comedy groups face, Grimms don't seem to produce value-for-money albums. This is mainly due to the fact that their loyalties are divided between three art forms and this tends to lead to an uneasy compromise.

Scaffold, who have contributed two members to Grimms, although still existing in their own right, have, in the past, attempted various ways of settling the loyalty problem. On their most recent album, "Sold Out" they concentrated solely on music tracks. On "Fresh Liver" they tried one side of music and one of words.

Even fresher than "Fresh Liver", though, are their first two albums (unfortunately deleted), "The Scaffold — Live At The Q.E. Hall" (1968) and "L The P" (1969). Here, in embryonic form, is their brave and successful attempt to fuse drama, poetry, comedy and out-and-out "pop" music.

Despite what might seem to be harsh criticisms both Scaffold and Grimms are well worth seeing for a night of laughs and entertainment. That, for me, is their most effective medium. Forget the quality of the music — feel the width of the smile.

ALBUMS

Bonzo Dog Band:
"Gorilla" (Sunset SLS 50160), "The Doughnut In Granny's Greenhouse" (Sunset SLS 50210), "Tadpoles" (retitled "I'm The Urban Spaceman") (Sunset SLS 50350), "Keynsham" (UA LBS 83920), "Let's Make Up And Be Friendly" (UA UAS 29288), "History Of The Bonzos" (UA UAD 60071).

Scaffold:
"The Scaffold Live At The Q.E. Hall" (EMI), "L The P" (EMI), "McGough And McGear" (EMI PCS 7047), "Fresh Liver" (Island ILPS 9234), "Sold Out" (Warner Bros. K56097).

Grimms:
"Grimms" (Island HELP 11), "Rocking Duck" (Island ILPS 9248).

AMERICAN COMEDY

"STAND UP AND LAUGH" — BOB NEWHART, SHELLEY BERMAN, BILL COSBY

Both Bob Newhart and Shelley Berman employed the technique of performing one side of a dialogue, and both employed it successfully. Best known are Newhart's telephone call to Sir Walter Raleigh in "Introducing Tobacco To Civilisation" and his role in "The Driving Instructor".

An expert in timing, inference and

● *Continued on page 21*

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CAT

STEVENS

Contd.

■ *From page 6*

stance I met the right person, who's into Numbers.

"I discovered a lot about Life's own nature in Numbers. Like, it just goes from 1 to 9, and then it ends — even though we feel ourselves that it goes on, that's just another illusion, 'cos the only other reality is eternity. So numbers are just a way of coping with ourselves, the earth and forces that naturally occur. Like even a rainstorm is a mathematical equation.

"Music is nothing but harmony of numbers, but I think it does contain everything.

"Like if you're looking into a fish-tank, suddenly it's easy to imagine that you're in the tank and something is watching you. Which is what is happening, because you are watching yourself as you do everything — that's what tells you whether things are right or wrong.

"If you're not doing that, you're classified as mad — which is another term we don't understand. I think we're all basically mad, but we don't allow it to come out and that's why we're all so frustrated.

"That's why music is still the best answer to every ailment — except if you're deaf and then" — he laughs — "well, you still hear things in your head, that's the amazing thing."

Stevens has often seemed an intellectual grasshopper; certainly his ideas come out by turn garbled and coherent. He seems to collect theories and absolute beliefs, and often has difficulty fitting them all together into a consistent conception of the universe.

Certainly his commitment to his music is unwavering; has been, no doubt, since the days of "Matthew And Son" — after all, one of the few '60's British pop songs to deal with the nature of capitalist society. And that's an inalienable feather in Cat's cap.

"It's one of the only songs I did like that, which is strange — even though I had that idea in my heart it didn't come out again as simply as in that song; in fact though that oppressiveness is the same in 'Father And Son'; just who's on top and who's underneath.

"That Hermann Hesse book *Beneath The Wheel* describes that perfectly.

"I'd still like to write songs that worked that simply, but you can't help, as you go along, becoming more refined. As you do, the grain gets finer and finer — one day people might just blow it away. But you just keep trying to perfect it, before your time is up. Work — it's the only way."

Do you work very hard?

"Oh yes — I don't know if many people think that I do, but I am always working. It's the only way to really have a good time; after you've worked you enjoy everything.

"I play a lot of drums at home. I've got them set up in front of the speakers, and I just keep going at them. When I'm feeling really uptight, I just go on the drums and I feel much better afterwards. Good therapy, definitely."

Which records do you play most?

"I'll tell you what I've been liking lately: The Eagles' 'One Of These Nights' — that's tremendous. And I think Queen and all that is incredible.

"But I suppose I listen to black music more than white. My favourite band at the moment are Earth, Wind and Fire; and I think Herbie Hancock has taken it all up where Sly left it — he has really influenced more of the sound now.

"Is that all right for you?"

The interview, it seemed, was over — and, yeah, that was enough. But there was the nagging question of that stick — surely Cat was not injured?

"No, I've been carrying it around with me since the last tour. I got it in the woods outside Frankfurt.

"I call him Amberthwiddle."

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Daffy Discs

● *Continued from page 19*

scene setting, Newhart is best heard at his best on "The Best Of Bob Newhart" (naturally).

Perhaps not so widely known this side of that Atlantic is Shelley Berman, a product of Chicago theatrical circles in the early '50s, a scene which threw up Mike Nichols, Elaine May and Alan Arkin among others.

Unfortunately (for Berman) a documentary film made for American TV at the height of his popularity during 1963 really shot his career by destroying his image. This, plus reports of his uneven temperament, have kept him out of the limelight for some time now.

On the other hand, Bill Cosby is rarely off the stages of Lake Tahoe and Las Vegas, where he plays regularly to late-night supper audiences. Strange to think that he began in the folk clubs of Greenwich Village during the early sixties.

Ah well! Still, his routines are a trifle wet to English ears — lots of mouth sounds of the sort that obnoxious second formers would make if they'd seen too much TV and not read enough books plus a collection of seemingly un-funny observations.

His wetness is captured well on "Bill Cosby 8:15 12:15", a double-album recording of two consecutive shows at Lake Tahoe. In value-for-money terms it's a rip-off as the shows are practically identical except for the fact that X-rated material is included in the late show (i.e., references to queers and transvestites) because there are no kiddy-winkers around.

The resulting patches of cleanliness in the 8:15 show are filled with embarrassing confrontations with members of the audience.

Again, for the best you have to buy "The Best". It contains three parts of his famous "Noah" routine (a classic) and has a whole side of his observations of life as a child. Whatever you do don't buy "At Last Bill Cosby Really Sings" because he doesn't. It's only a title.

ALBUMS

"The Best Of Bob Newhart" (Warner Bros K46001), "Inside Shelley Berman" (EMI CLP 1300), "The Best Of Bill Cosby" (Warner Bros WS 1146), "Bill Cosby 8:15 1:15" (Tetragrammaton 583748).

LENNY BRUCE

Lenny, as we now feel free to call him, helped innovate a new form of comedy which in turn fired a whole generation of comics. Leaving behind the joke and the punchline and the mother-in-law and the honeymoon night, Bruce saw the humour in life as we already lived it rather than in life as it might be with the addition of a banana skin or a falling ladder.

And because of this Bruce's source of material was, in the main, not from other comedians or from scriptwriters, but from his own life and from the joint life of his country.

Although the self-awareness trend is now well established, both in comedy and in the New Journalism, when Bruce was operating during the late '50s and early '60s his work formed a stark contrast to that of the majority of his contemporaries.

Unfortunately, Bruce has become best known for his side-issues — his use of then-prohibited language and his death by an overdose of morphine. Whether many actually listened and learned from the points he tried to make it's hard to say.

What can be said, though, is that he was the first man through the "Forbidden Word" door, and for breaking it down he had to bear the bruises.

But, Bruce's greatest weakness was that he had no moral basis to support his criticisms. During his 1961 concert at Carnegie Hall he confessed: "I'm really getting on this plateau of thinking. There's no right and wrong — just my right, and your wrong." So, with no rights and wrongs Bruce would have to admit that all that was left was prejudice and therefore he was virtually denying his own right to preach.

Stylistically Bruce was a free-wheeler, gliding from topic to topic with the fluidity of Charlie Parker. However, the combination of early '60s hip, Yiddish, references to specifically American culture and mumbled incoherencies make him very difficult to listen to at times.

It seems that ultimately he's the artist's artist — a man who influenced the influencers rather than a popular figure in his own right. I doubt whether even the film will change that.

ALBUMS

"Lenny Bruce/Carnegie Hall" (triple) (U/A UAS 9800), "Lenny Bruce/The Berkeley Concert" (Transatlantic TRA 195).

WOODY ALLEN

Woody Allen was the perfect comedian to amuse a generation who'd been told God was dead and who'd consequently substituted psycho-analysts in place of priests. Small, balding, bespectacled and none-too-pretty, it seemed as though he had every right to be self-depreciatory and disillusioned with life itself. His obsessions have been, and seem to remain, Love, Death and God — does Love exist, does God exist and isDeath really the end?

His first album (a live collection of nightclub routines) was released in 1964 as "Woody Allen". His second release, a year later, was "Woody Allen Volume Two".

However, the best of the three single albums came in 1968 with "The Third Woody Allen Album", a concert given in San Francisco. Here the rapport between Allen and his audience was perfect and the second side in particular is a memorable experience. What he had gained in four years, both in confidence and in timing, made all the difference. The set is closed with Allen inviting questions from the audience:

Lady: *"Have you ever been picked up by a homosexual?"*

Allen: *"No, sir."*

Another Lady: *"Are you an only child?"*

Allen: *"I am, yes. I have a sister."*

The best of Allen's three albums have been collected together on a UA double album, "The Nightclub Years".

Since leaving the club circuit Allen has concentrated on films *(Play It Again Sam, Sleeper, Bananas, Everything You Wanted To Know About Sex But Were Afraid To Ask, What's Up Tiger Lily* and *Love And Death)* and on his writing which appears frequently in the New Yorker. Many of the lines used in his early club performances crop up in the films.

ALBUMS

"Woody Allen" (Colpix CP 518), "Woody Allen Volume Two" (Colpix CP 488), "The Third Woody Allen Album" (Capitol ST 2986), "The Night Club Years" (U/A UAS 9968).

LORD BUCKLEY

A fine eccentric, Richard Buckley belongs in a category all his own. Beginning in the '30s when he performed during dance marathons and in tent shows, carrying on through the war years performing to GIs with Ed Sullivan, he finally developed a style of delivery in the early '50s which was to immortalise him.

The style, which had more to do with sound and language than with actual content, was based on the hot jazz line. Buckley termed it "Hipsomatic" and specifically it meant that his routines, which were in fact short stories, poured out of his mouth like Charlie Parkers wailing sax — speeding up, slowing down, pausing, getting louder, softening out ... Included in it was primitive jive talk, then purely the language of musicians ... later to be incorporated into most English speaking cultures.

Buckley is to be listened to like music and admired. He's amusing (that's where his laughs come) both in his verbal technique and for his ingenious reweaving of tales into jive-ese.

Take, for instance, his version of Christ's healing ministry in "The Naz" or his reshaping of Shakespeare in "Willie The Shake": *"Hipsters, flipsters and ginger poppin' daddies — lend me your lobes! I come not to lay Caesar out but to hip you to him ..."*

As a cultural footnote, it's interesting to note that while Buckley was experimenting with language in terms of jazz phrasing, poets like Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti and writers such as Kerouac and Cassidy were carrying out similar work in their own art forms.

ALBUMS

"The Best Of Lord Buckley" (Liberty LBS 83191E).

MIKE NICHOLS AND ELAINE MAY

Mike Nichols is better known, in England at least, for his work as a film director *(The Graduate; Catch 22; Carnal Knowledge)* but it was in the mid-'50s that he began to be recognised in the US — as a comedian.

Along with Elaine May, who later went on to write drama for Broadway, he brought comedy to a theatrical audience — an audience who could respond to references to Adler, Freud and Bertrand Russell.

Along with David Steinberg, Alan Arkin and a few others Nichols and May grew out of a theatre group formed at the University of Chicago in 1953. From there they became the "Playwrights Theatre Group" and later spawned "The Second City", "The Committee" and, Nichols and May's own "Compass Players".

Their particular innovation was to introduce the technique of theatre and the tradition of theatre into their improvisational dialogues — certainly a step or two away from the world of the stand-up comic and a seeming predecessor to Peter Cooke and Dudley Moore and Lily Tomlin.

Still amazingly funny almost 20 years later are scenes like "Disc Jockey" (a radio encounter between a name-dropping DJ and a dumb but still name-dropping starlet) and "Second Piano Concerto (The Dentist)".

The duo are seemingly better with an audience to work off, and on their album "Retrospect" one side is live and the other a studio recording. Interestingly enough they included a four-and-a-half minute track entitled "Nichols And May At Work" which features them in the studio working out a sketch which in fact doesn't take off because Nichols can't keep from laughing.

It's a unique insight into the way they worked.

ALBUM

Mike Nichols And Elaine May — "Retrospect" (double) (Mercury SRM 2-628).

CHILDREN OF LENNY — GEORGE CARLIN, DAVID STEINBERG, ROBERT KLEIN

As with Bruce, George Carlin was a "take my wife ..." stand-up comedian until he saw some truth or other, grew his hair and became too outrageous for the likes of Las Vegas.

But unlike Bruce, Carlin doesn't face the same hassles because dirty words have recently become OK currency — except perhaps, on TV and radio. In fact, one of Carlin's best routines is entitled "Seven Words You Can Never Say On Television" and is built around a serious discussion of the seven forbidden words.

Carlin, though, doesn't seem to be pressing any big causes in his work. The laughter he generates is usually the laughter of recognition because he's excellent at perceiving the inner workings of the mind and noting down moments most of us let pass by.

As he puts it on "Toledo Window Box", *"My job is essentially thinking up goofy shit. I mean, you don't have time all week running around signing cheques and going to the laundromat."* (He's at his best on "Class Clown", which is really worth possessing.)

Another successful young comedian currently working the clubs and concert halls is Robert Klein. His material is tight and personalised — thoughtful, but not in aid of any specific cause. On "Child Of The Fifties" he recounts incidents from a typical American childhood spent in the '50s (not too American to alienate the British though).

"Mind Over Matter", his latest release, is more general.

Both albums are well worth a listen. Phil Berger, in his book on American comedy, *The Last Laugh*, singles Klein out for particular recognition. He deserves it.

Not so amazing is David Steinberg, son of a Rabbi and a former student of theology. He's too ponderous and involved with himself (even his photographs seem to show that). Also, his connections with theology mean that Moses, Lot, Joshua and Jezebel come in for a fair bit of flack and this seems to be a little bit of an indulgent exercise considering most people aren't well grounded enough in Holy Scripture to accuse him of blasphemy.

ALBUMS

"Class Clown", George Carlin (Little David LD 1004), "Take Offs And Put Ons", George Carlin (RCA ANLI 1086), "AM & FM" George Carlin (Little David LD 7214), "Toledo Window Box", George Carlin (Little David K59652), "Child Of The 50's", Robert Klein (Brut 6001), "Mind Over Matter", Robert Klein (Brut 6600), "Disguised As A Normal Person", David Steinberg (Elektra EKS 74065).

HIPPER THAN THOU — CHEECH & CHONG, FIRESIGN THEATRE, NATIONAL LAMPOON, MURRAY ROMAN, UNCLE DIRTY

The most outstanding thing about Cheech & Chong was that they sold an amazing number of records. Until their success the potential market for comedy albums was fairly small — TV being considered the prime outlet for a comedian's work.

However, when Cheech & Chong's work is evaluated it seems that they've contributed very little in terms of innovation or imagination.

Basically they exploited the humour traditionally wrapped around drink

FIRESIGN THEATRE

CHEECH

GEORGE CARLIN

and drunkenness by substituting the new and disapproved sense distorter — dope.

The first two albums ("Cheech & Chong" and "Big Bambu") were almost 100 per cent marijuana merriment and produced a handful of memorable scenes ("Dave", "The Bust", "Let's Make A Dope Deal"). However, by the time of the third album both their subject matter and their delivery was verging on what we doctors call "boredom".

Maybe C & C felt the same way too because "Los Cochinos" began to veer more towards Middle America (where the Silent Majority hang out) and "Wedding Album" (1974) was all but there.

Outside of goofy grass gags C & C aren't much fun and so maybe an early retirement is in sight. Certainly with young Jack Ford admitting that he's wheezed on the weed and the First Lady herself explaining how it was all a natural part of growing up the subject of the "roach" or "reefer" is no longer risque enough to sustain C & C's position as outlaw comedians.

Far more inventively part of the dope culture are The Firesign Theatre (Phil Proctor, Phil Austin, David Ossman and Peter Bergman) whose surreal scenarios were first broadcast as *Radio Free Oz* on Radio Station KRLA.

In a sense they follow the tradition of *The Goons* ("Spike Milligan as Elvis," they say) but they're far more surreal, operating on several levels simultaneously and weaving sketches over sketches with locations and characters drifting away unnoticed.

Firesign are by far the most intelligent operators in the field of Radio Comedy but their albums need quite a few listens to get into. They supposedly work better the more deranged your own senses are. Firesign albums aren't about anything. They are something.

National Lampoon is an American humour magazine that reads like the product of a mating between *Mad* and *Private Eye*. But, besides the written word, Lampoon also believes in the word spoken — hence a number of albums have been released from amongst its ranks over the past three years.

There are few albums without laugh tracks that really succeed but both "Radio Dinner" (1972) and "Gold Turkey" (1975) are amazing highs in humour. Their sketches relating to rock are particularly potent — notably "Magical Misery Tour" on the "Dinner" album which has a Lennon impersonator singing huge chunks of his confessional *Rolling Stone* interview to the tune of "Give Me Some Truth".

The track was supposedly taken from the album "Yoko Is A Concept By Which We Measure Our Pain". Another classic, also on "Dinner", is "Those Fabulous Sixties" which has Dylan advertising a compilation album, "Golden Protest" — featuring "What Have They Dont To The Rain?", "Pleasant Valley Sunday", "In The Ghetto" and "Eve Of Destruction" ... to name but a few.

All of the Lampoon sketches are well controlled and would appeal both sides of the Atlantic and both sides of age 30.

Biggest laugh for rockophiles, though, comes with "Lemmings" (1973), their tribute to Woodstock. This was originally presented on stage at The Village Gate in Greenwich Village and the impersonations of Dylan, Cocker, Baez and Crosby, Stills and Gang are incredibly accurate.

Murray Roman fused rap, electronics, echo and soul music with all the wizardry of a DJ. And Pete Townshend in fact liked him enough to put an album of his out on Track in 1968 — "You Can't Beat People Up And Have Them Say I Love You". Unfortunately, he seems very dated now — Vietnam, dope, smoking banana skins, Twiggy, etc. — in fact, almost the sort of guy Lampoon would send up today with his hey man like chick lingo.

In the end he followed in Lenny's footsteps by passing away from an overdose.

Uncle Dirty is not dirty and neither is he funny. Bad comedians have always existed — Uncle Dirty, for all the glamour attached to his name, merely proves that long hair, a moustache and references to mescaline don't make them any more acceptable to hip audiences.

"The Uncle Dirty Primer", recorded live at the Village Gaslight in 1970, is undoubtably what we in the medical profession call a "bummer". Listen to the jokes fall.

By far the best dope-comedy album is "A Child's Garden Of Grass" (subtitled "A Pre-legislation Comedy") which was put out by Elektra in 1971 and was based on the book of the same name. Anyone who is, or knows, a dope freak will appreciate the idiosyncracies described. An extremely perceptive and funny album.

ALBUMS

Cheech & Chong:
"Cheech And Chong" (A & M AMLS 67010), "Big Bambu" (Ode SP 77014), "Los Cochinos" (ODE 77019), "The Wedding Album" (Ode SP 77025).

Firesign Theatre:
"Waiting For The Electrician Or Someone Like Him" (Columbia XSM 118780), "How Can You Be In Two Places At Once When You're Not Anywhere At All" (Columbia CS 9884), "Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me The Pliers" (Columbia C30102), "I Think We're All Bozos On This Bus" (Columbia 530737), "Dear Friends" (double) Columbia KG 31099), "The Tale Of The Giant Rat Of Sumatra" (Columbia KC 32730), "Not Insane Or Anything You Want To" (Columbia KC 31585), "Everything You Know Is Wrong" (Columbia KC 33141).

National Lampoon:
"Radio Dinner" (Island HELP 8), "Lemmings", "Gold Turkey" (Epic PE 33410).

OTHERS:
"You Can't Beat People Up And Have Them Say I Love You," Murray Roman (Track 2407013), "The Uncle Dirty Primer", Uncle Dirty (Electra EKS 74097), "The Child's Garden Of Grass" (Elektra EKS 75012).

BLACK IS PROUD: Dick Gregory, Richard Pryor, Jimmie Walker

Dick Gregory gave up performing in nightclubs in 1973 in order to devote his time to lecturing on the college circuit (for considerably less money). It would seem to have been a good move because Gregory was essentially a moralist using comedy to promote the cause of his people.

As with Lenny Bruce much of his humour came from revealing the discrepancies between what we say we believe and how we act — in his case it was the discrepancy between the American constitution and how it in fact treated its black members.

But Gregory's stance was altogether different from that of newer black comedians such as Richard Pryor who seem to have reverted to the White Man's tricks of insult and prejudice to win the battle.

Pryor in particular mocks white people for their sobriety and observance of etiquette and really plays up to his black audience.

Unlike Gregory, Pryor shows little real human concern. His heroic position in the US is understandable in that blacks have been so bound-and-gagged media-wise that their own private humour has never been brought into the open before.

Jimmie Walker, star of a situation comedy series on American TV, bridges a gap between Gregory's concern and Pryor's wit. He's a gentler, more human comedian who can make fun of us Caucasians without turning it into warfare. Maybe he realises that you can't eliminate white racialism by encouraging black racialism.

ALBUMS

"Dick Gregory's Frankenstein" (double) (Poppy PYS 6000), "Dick Gregory — Caught In The Act" (double) (Poppy PP-LA176 G2), "... Is It Something I Said?", Richard Pryor (Reprise K54052), "Dyn O-Mite", Jimmie Walker (Buddah BDS 5635).

Whic button's for the Wall of Sound?

Good-bad, but not evil...

. . . to quote some words from a Shangri-Las opus. In this care it's true confessions from DION DIMUCCI, a drug addict at 14 but now following the straight and narrow path. He talks to ROY CARR

DION DIMUCCI

PHIL SPECTOR has always had a flair for the dramatic. This evening is to prove no exception, for with the slightest touch of a panel button, Spector suddenly brings the full recorded force of his Wall Of Sound to such an abrupt halt that the ensuing silence is deafening.

The overall effect is akin to landing a 747 jumbo jet on one thin dime by cutting-out the motors.

Turning to his engineer, Spector signals frantically for an instant playback. As the garbled high-pitched whirl of tapes being re-wound punctures the silence, he swaggers from behind the large mixing console to take up a position between Bruce Springsteen and Dion and addresses the audience of admirers who have gathered in the dimly-lit control room of the legendary Gold Star Studios in Los Angeles.

"This", announces Spector in a voice usually reserved for the Main Event, "is Bruce Springsteen . . . the biggest star in America at the moment", adding as a well-meaning aside, "well, that's what *they* tell him!"

He then turns to Dion, for whom he has arranged the session, and continues: "Springsteen probably doesn't know why he's a superstar and Dion, you probably can't understand why you're not!"

It's a statement that's so accurate that when both singers make eye-contact they just as quickly avert their attention in acute embarrassment.

Things didn't always used to be that way. At the turn of the 60s, such records as "Teenager In Love", "Where Or When", "Lonely Teenager", "Runaround Sue", "The Wanderer", "Ruby Baby" and "Drip Drop" had almost overnight transformed Dion (alternatively with and then without) The Belmonts into one of America's most consistent selling rock 'n' roll attractions.

For a five year period they were the only successful white accapella group in the whole of New York City.

It was during this transitional period between the decline of rock's first Golden Era and the advent of the Second Generation spearheaded by The Beatles that Dion was as big as any rock star (other than Presley) could ever aspire to be.

Not since the tragic death of Eddie Cochran had anyone emerged with such true street corner charisma. As it transpired, you couldn't get any more All-American than Dion DiMucci without being branded a wimp. Neither could you get any sicker.

At 21 Dion exuded so much punk bravado — along with jean-creaming good looks — that there was hardly a place on Earth where his slightly off-key nasal whine didn't sell records in vast quantities.

However, there was something the public didn't know. And that is, he was dying on his feet.

By his own admission, since 14 Dion had been hopelessly strung-out on almost every kind of dope, spending all his time nodding out on street corners or hustling in the alley for sufficient bread to score whatever it took to get him through each and every day.

His elevation to stardom only made it that much easier for him to support what had rapidly escalated into an extremely expensive habit.

But before he passed the point of no return, Dion took the cure — eight years ago. Since when, he says, he has remained clean.

"To be quite honest with you", he admits the day after he'd cut a dynamite new single with Phil Spector, "I really don't like to talk about my years as a junkie."

He toys with his coffee cup in the Old World Restaurant on Sunset Strip, and the wail of a passing police car helps to change his mind. He agrees to talk about how he licked his problem because he's aware that addiction to hard drugs is not only rock 'n' roll's most acute malady but a sickness that has reached epidemic proportions throughout America.

"Actually, I was shootin' drugs long before I got into music", he begins without a sign of emotion, "and that's one reason why I got into music. I was in trouble and needed a way out, but then I reached a certain point in my career when I discovered nothing but emptiness and frustration".

But how does a mere kid of 14, reach a situation whereby his entire world seems to revolve around hypodermic needles?

"It's a disease. I mean, how does a 14-year-old kid over-eat to the point where he destroys his body? How does a 14-year-old kid become an alcoholic? There's a lotta things that 14-year-old kids do that are very bad for them.

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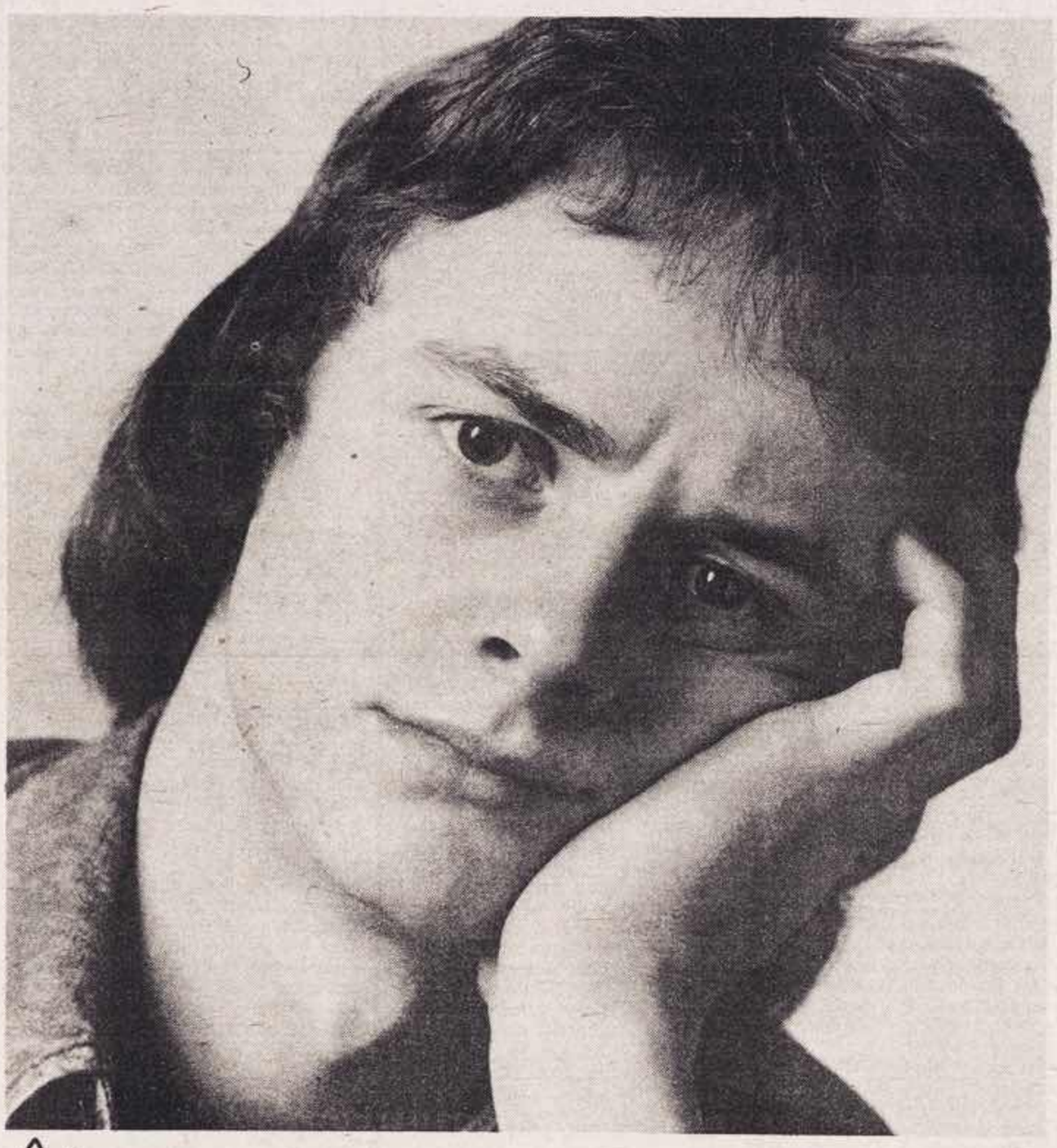

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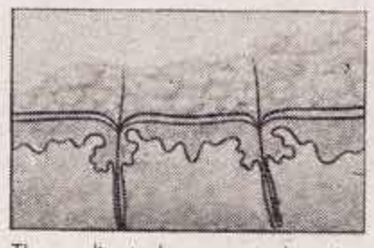

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Keep medicines safely

DION in the studio with Spector's Men

"Like most diseases, addiction to drugs starts out very slowly but what happens is that you soon discover that it's a progressive disease — it never gets better, just increasingly worse.

"However, in my particular case," Dion confesses, "I reached a point where my drug addiction became a moral issue. Like I honestly thought I was a bad person.

"When I found out that I wasn't bad, I was very sick and had to get well again, then it was a whole different story."

Dion believes that drug addiction involves basically three kinds of sickness: spiritual, mental and physical — and that the only way to rehabilitate oneself is to fight these maladies in reverse order.

"You've got to get physically well to begin with, then mentally well, and once you've done that you'll improve on a strictly spiritual level."

However, getting the monkey off one's back is much easier said than done. It took him years to realise that there was only one way out of his predicament.

"As far as I'm concerned, growing up was a real rough trip for me, 'cause I was a very troubled kid. Without fully realising it, I was closing off to the outside world to the point that my whole life existed in either a bag of smack or a pill."

He celebrated his new-found success as a rock star by spending a four-month period between the release of "Teenager In Love" and "Where Or When" trying — without any lasting success — to beat his problem. It wasn't long before he was in a worse state than when he entered hospital, and that's how he was to exist for the next few years.

"When I look back on those years I suppose that I must make it all sound sick and a complete downer, but the funniest thing is that for a kid that young with such a bad sickness, there were a lotta good times.

"I have to be honest with you and tell you, it was fun for a few years — until that time when I crossed that line and hit the skids.

"I was 26 and I'd hit the bottom. Now I don't know how low that is but it was low enough for me."

For the first time in the conversation, he becomes very slightly emotional.

"I had run out of excuses, there was no one left for me to blame for where I was. Now I'm not talking about artistically or musically, when you hit rock bottom you find out that your personality is bad."

"Now it wasn't a question of whether or not I should keep on shootin' drugs, I had to decide there and then whether or not I wanted to live or die."

"At the risk of sounding too melodramatic, that's where I was at. I really did have to decide that, at the age of 26. And I quickly realsed that more than anything else in the world I wanted to live.

"I knew my limits. I knew what I could use. Or to be more precise, I knew what I had lost my licence to use.

"I can't take drugs. They don't work for me and so I eventually stopped using them eight years ago, and since that time I've steadily got better."

He's adamant that he's never been tempted to return.

"Thank God, since I quit, drugs have never been a threat to my sanity." He gazes into the bottom of his cup. If you take the worst day that I've had since I've been straight, clean, sober or whatever you want to call it, I wouldn't trade it for the best years I spent getting stoned.

"If I'm shakin' today or a little unsure of something, I know it's for real, not the junk".

He goes back to the basic problem: "It's not a question of getting back on drugs, but the whole sick personality that goes along with it. It's about blaming people again for your own shortcomings and putting people down just in order to feel good.

"The alarming thing about being hooked is that it's a two-fold disease. One you take one drug ... it's like someone who over-indulges in food or drink or gambling, it quickly becomes a mental obsession which turns into a physical compulsion."

He flicks through his memory-bank for a better description.

"You're allergic to drugs, it's as simple as that. Once you get involved it quickly sets up a chain-reaction whereby you don't realise what's happened to you until it's too late, by which time you've become hopelessly hooked.

"When I got informed of the causes I found it relatively easy to stop that chain-reaction. Luckily for me, I discovered that in every way, hard drugs are much more than an expensive vice. They're destroyers, you lose your health, your money, your family, your friends, your self-respect and if you're not lucky — your life".

So now, what of his artistic comeback? "I'm not exactly striking lightnin' across the sky in a new career as a performer", he admits, "but I like to feel that I'm moving forward to better things."

When Dion was growing up on the streets of New York City, the sound of Phil Spector's music stirred him like no other sound.

Likewise, Mr. Spector has always had a warm affinity towards, as he puts it, "Singin' Italians who stutter". That's why last year, the two of them got together in the same studio and recorded a song, which for my money, was the finest thing committed to wax by anyone in 1975.

Listen to Dion singing "Born To Be With You" and then *you* tell him he's washed up.

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ON THE

Ronnie Lane twangs an adenoid *Pic: JOE STEVENS*

Certainly British, Usually Music, but Hardly Great

Five out of ten for effort, must try harder next year.
But excellent results in some subjects.

The Great British Music Festival

OLYMPIA

Wednesday

JUST BECAUSE promoter Mel Bush calls it the *Great* British Music Festival (or, if you prefer, the Great *British* Music Festival), doesn't necessarily imply that he means it.

He might have crossed his fingers when he thought up that title for the re-run of Attica State meets the Spirit Of Bacchanalia.

The **Doctors Of Madness** are certainly not *Great*. They are, I believe, British. It is debatable whether the sound that opened this little bash halfway through Wednesday afternoon could be categorised as Music. Experiments in uncontrolled sound distortion, certainly. But who is to know if this is the fault of the Doctors? Not I, for one.

There are four Doctors Of Madness, and they all look as if they should be hairdressers: butch cropped hair, paint flashed faces, khaki army gear or wool tights.

They play a very long "Waiting For The Man". It is appalling. As such it stirs up the appropriate sense of psychosis.

"Get on yer feet," bellows the lead androgyne to the audience. They don't.

The band throws the Quo fans who are already gathered round the front of the stage a large number of badges with "Doctors Of Madness" printed on them. The Quo fans pick them up. The Doctors Of Madness look happy.

Then the kids throw them back.

The **Steve Gibbons Band** exude a solid Brum sense of self-confidence. Vocalist Gibbons is obviously heavily into Errol Flynn/Captain Blood, with leather pants, frilled shirt and trimmed beard. He shakes his hips a lot. Bass-player Trevor Burton (For I believe it is he) in Boy Racer Sharp lurex leathers (ideal for that afternoon out at the pitstop).

Cocky too: unlike the Doctors Of Madness the Steve Gibbins Band don't stand about looking neurotic that they're not looking neurotic.

The lead guitarist wears a red velvet suit and cotton-picks those guitar licks. Occasionally he jousts inoffensively and quite sweetly with the other guitarist. He injects everything from "Watching The River Flow" to Gene Vincent's "Get It" with the sound of being down home in the Birmingham Bull Ring.

They go down very well.

Burke Shelley shifts his way to the mike and athletically rips his voice into it.

Some moments have elapsed before Burke's passion-gripped tonsils realise that they are receiving no amplification.

Life's like that with **Budgie.**

Ahhh. *Noble* Budgie, filling in at the last moment for the errant Climax.

Now I cannot admit to being overly familiar with Budgie's song titles. Indeed, I confess that Burke Shelley's is the only Budgie name that I could drop. *(Burke Shelley???)*

Burke has owl glasses — backstage I notice that Burke dispenses with this vital section of his image and dons a pair of what were once known as "Buddy Hollies" — a denim jacket and loon pants. He has very, very long hair. Burke is probably not much more than five foot four inches tall. His bass stance is therefore consistently strange.

Burke and the other two Budgies are joined by another guitarist and they play a medley off a few albums. "In For The Kill" and a few others. They present a perfect S. Quo riff overlaid with a rumbling bass from Burke.

If I didn't find him so funny I'd have to concede that Burke really is a most formidable little fellow. Your archetypal heavy metal punk. And Welsh too. Just like Dylan Thomas. He provides more unleashed energy than any other bass player I've ever seen. Just watching him would give John Entwistle a coronary.

The Budgie guitarist — i.e. *not* the guitarist who joins them on stage but the one who is already there — looks very Welsh, and his guitar playing is solid and skilful with that hint of a blunt mint that is quintessential HM. He is also very loud. All of Budgie are very loud.

The drummer looks heavy but kind-hearted. He is, in fact, a fairly enormously good powerhouse drummer putting his back behind the slightest tap of a symbol. There is much — oh, *so-ooo* much — heavy riffing and chording — which no doubt symbolises the maelstrom that is human existence — and then Burke sings. The Burke Shelley pipes provide a sound that is trebly Plantoid without the power, if you can figure that one out.

There is then a drum solo that is decidedly Bonhamesque — without the frills or the finesse — that shifts into a slow blues wail, that in turn transmogrifies into what is an obvious Budgie call-sign judging from the reaction. Yes, it thunders and Burke wails and Budgie got them Swansea blues.

Then they finish.

Let it be known that Budgie are the first band to play an encore at the Great British Music Festival. They play an archetypal HM rocker structured on "Immigration Song" sulphate.

Let it also be known that Budgie also go down very, very well.

Chris Salewicz

OWN UP time. We all have gaps in our musical education and one of mine is **Thin Lizzy.** Last time I saw them was two and a half years ago, when they were a good working band, great support for warming up an audience, but in no way a threat to the 'main attraction'.

So it was rather a shock to see just how much they had improved. True, they weren't a big threat to Quo, but they gave them a good run for their money.

Starting with "Fighting" (from the elpee of the same name) it soon became obvious, despite the appalling acoustics that are Olympia, that this band were not just run-of-the-mill. Phil Lynott, the brownie Irishman, is the main man who cajoles and yells at the audience in a way that you'd have to be asleep not to notice.

When they played "Rosalie" the beginning sounded very similar to Quo's "Caroline", but it wasn't just this similarity that got Quo freaks off the ground. There's a genuine warmth, not to mention attack and flourish, that Lizzy possess.

Drummer Brian Downey gets his chance to show his mettle during "Sha La La La La" but I do wish they wouldn't use that boring prop, dry ice.

Encore was a stage number which I am told is entitled "Me And The Boys Are Wondering How You And The Girls Are Getting Home Tonight".

The audience went berserk. So did I.

Gosh I do like **Steve Marriott.** When he started with "Wotcha Gonna Do About It" it seemed he could do no wrong. He might even go into "Itchycoo Park" later on.

He didn't.

But those who hope for a Small Faces reunion found it reassuring to note that Marriott still does have those frighteningly powerful vocal cords, and can still get it on on stage — whether with Humble Pie or his latest venture The Allstars (Ian Wallace, drums; Greg Ridley, bass; Micky Finn, bass). Marriott, however, didn't seem any too happy with the crowd. During "80 Days In The Hole" he encouraged them to sing along. Many resplnded, but not all. So finally, in desperation, he yelled, "Just sing something all you guys know about — hole!"

They yelled back.

Apparently the root of the trouble was that certain bods had made it known they wanted to see Quo. So Marriott went off stage and we waited a good few minutes before he returned, made some reference to what he thought of people who yelled for another band when he was onstage, and finally said, "We have to do our fuckin' show."

It was a bit of a gamble, but those who had yelled looked sheepish and the rest cheered him for standing up for himself.

He encored, looked a bit happier, yelled his massive voice out of his tiny frame and then, looking chuffed, left.

And on came **Status Quo,** four blokes who make a very good living considering they were once referred to as lame brains.

The sound in the vast auditorium was dire, but none of the audience appeared to notice. Those who previously had been sitting at the back, jealously guarding their cans of lager, rose for the occasion and despite the vast seating arrangement preferred to crush themselves standing near the front.

Quo were incredible — just the kind of band you need to keep your spirits up when it's pouring with rain outside. And despite the fact many of the audience had been there for nearly eight hours Quo managed to generate a whole lotta excitement for everyone.

"Backwater/Just Take Me", was announced to lots of applause, they could have played "Happy Birthday" and would have got the same reaction. And always you were aware of a foot tapping and a head nodding — then you'd look down and see it was your own.

At the midnight hour we got the obligatory 'Auld Lang Syne' immediately followed by "Caroline" (their best stage number) and "Bye Bye Johnnie".

Julie Webb

Thursday

PICTURE YOURSELF in a place called Olympia, where Procol Harum are struggling against the environmental odds.

Under a pastoral painted wall hangs the Great British Music Festival stage set, which looks like a giant reproduction of a cardboard pop-up of the sort obtainable from the back of a Kellogg's packet. To the sides of the rostrum are banks of PA gear. And the stage lighting shines ineffectually on Procol with the house lights still up.

But the band battles on gamely.

Halfway back kids fill the main area of the hall, with the mixing desk dividing them off from a vast expanse of uncovered floor. Admittedly the seating areas to each side seem well filled, and although the official door receipts indicate an attendance of over 6,000, the audience looks half that size.

Despite it all, Procol play on.

The atmosphere's bleak. The sound quality's muddy and damp. And underneath the seating platforms there's wire

Far Right, Nazareth guitarist gapes as Paul Rodgers (right) paunches it up.

Pix: PENNIE SMITH

TOWN

mesh and assorted debris, giving the impression they're giant wooden-topped waste paper bins. In the bar there's no keg beer, they're only selling cans.

What a way to greet the New Year.

By now **Snafu** had opened the day's entertainment on schedule at 1 p.m. with some pleasingly tight music. They were followed by guitarist/pianist/vocalist **John Miles,** later described by those in attendance as "really good". And then along came the surrogate Lindisfarne, **Jack the Lad,** with the first big guns the **Baker Gurvitz Army** invading the stage next.

Apparently all was not well within the Army's ranks. Hampered by poor sound, dispatches indicate the band were not particularly pleased with their show.

Procol encountered the same difficulties with the house PA. Which goes to show one of two things. Either Olympia is just not suited acoustically for rock bands, or the engineers had problems controlling 40,000 watts.

Personally, I found the venue dismally impersonal, partly due to the hangar-like ambience of the actual location, and partly because the house lights remained on during the sets.

I doubt it was Procol's fault they were unable to create a conducive atmosphere for their music against such handicaps, because they had the appearance of a band playing well and enjoying themselves. And by the halfway mark of their act they'd confidently zipped through a lot of their established material, like "Bringing Home The Bacon", "Shine On Brightly", "Conquistador", "Grand Hotel" and "Pandora's Box".

Unfortunately, the sound of B. J. Wilson's kit and Mick Grabham's guitar didn't penetrate the rather jarring overall sound of Gary Brooker's vocals and piano, Chris Copping's organ and the rumbling bass from Alan Cartwright.

As a result the middle section of their show seemed to be a shambling cacophony with dull thuds where the normal incisive rhythmic accents used to be. And even "A Salty Dog" lacked distinction.

Had it not been for their version of "The Blue Danube" — when they managed to stimulate the audience into some sort of physical reaction — I'm sure the response would have just been appreciatively warm. With a couple of minutes to spare (as Brooker put it) they consolidated that isolated achievement with "A Whiter Shade Of Pale".

But what, may we ask, were they doing playing second to **Barclay James Harvest**?

Well, according to Chrysalis, Procol's record company, the band themselves choose their own spot, and as officially they shared bill honours with Barclay Jim, it matters little they didn't in fact close the show.

Tradition, however, is difficult to break. And from my own point of view I'm used to the Bigger Name finishing an evening for me, otherwise the complete show seems a little anti-climactic. That BJH should be considered good enough to deserve equal billing is, again, something I find puzzling.

Nothing personal, lads, but having seen them back in October on their British tour I'd arrived at the conclusion they didn't have the style, class or material to compete with, well, let's say, Procol. Had Harum pulled off a blinder then Jim would have had problems on their hands.

But Procol didn't, and in comparison Barclay James Harvest opened their set with unexpected confidence and panache. What's more, their sound was extremely good and "A Song For You" immediately riveted my attention.

Was I going to have to eat humble newsprint?

To a certain extent, yes. The first five numbers, including "Crazy City" were extremely good. Drummer Mel Pritchard powered the other three on, and they handled their respective roles well, managing to create a distinctive and appealing sound.

From John Lees came some particularly good vocals, a chore he shares with bassist Les Holroyd. And Stewart Wolstenholme, with an array on moog mellotron, organ and pianos around him, blended the melodies into the ballsy backbeats.

Their moment of glory (and may I add critical recognition) was shortlived, as they were unable to sustain their opening attack. Having initially allowed number to follow number quickly and maintain the momentum they started to make tedious announcements and introductions, the material becoming repetitive.

I soon became bored with Lees's self-deprecating remarks about the banality of their material. And eventually I became bored agreeing with him, especially during numbers like "Child Of The Universe" and "Titles".

And as their act slowly slid through the floorboards my yawns were punctuating every other bar.

However, the most alarming realisation was yet to come. If this was the Great British Music Festival to open '76, what the hell is the worst going to be like?

Tony Stewart

Friday/Saturday

IT'S NO way to take in rock 'n' roll, that's for sure.

If you listen near the front, your ears won't allow you to forget for the next six hours or so. Sitting at the back, the sound is so poorly defined and the stage seemingly miles away, that it's impossible to feel involved in what's going down at all.

But it is big business and promoter Mel Bush, who thinks last week's four-day Great British Music Festival will become an annual event, admits to making money out of the whole thing.

Arriving at Olympia just before Saturday's show is due to start, one is taken aback by the overwhelming grimness of the place. The murals at either end of the hall — English country scenes — [illegible]le to brighten it up, instead [illegible]mphasising its inadequacies.

Still, the queue extends beyond the perimeter of the building and doubtless there'll be many who'll go home late tonight thinking what a great time they've had. After all it is a good time to stage something of this nature but it's a shame that someone like The Who or Zeppelin aren't on the bill to pep things up.

When **Charlie** come on just after one o'clock I don't envy them one bit. Who wants to listen to rock 'n' roll at this time of day? They approach the situation with admirable professionalism considering they're such a young band with little or no track record.

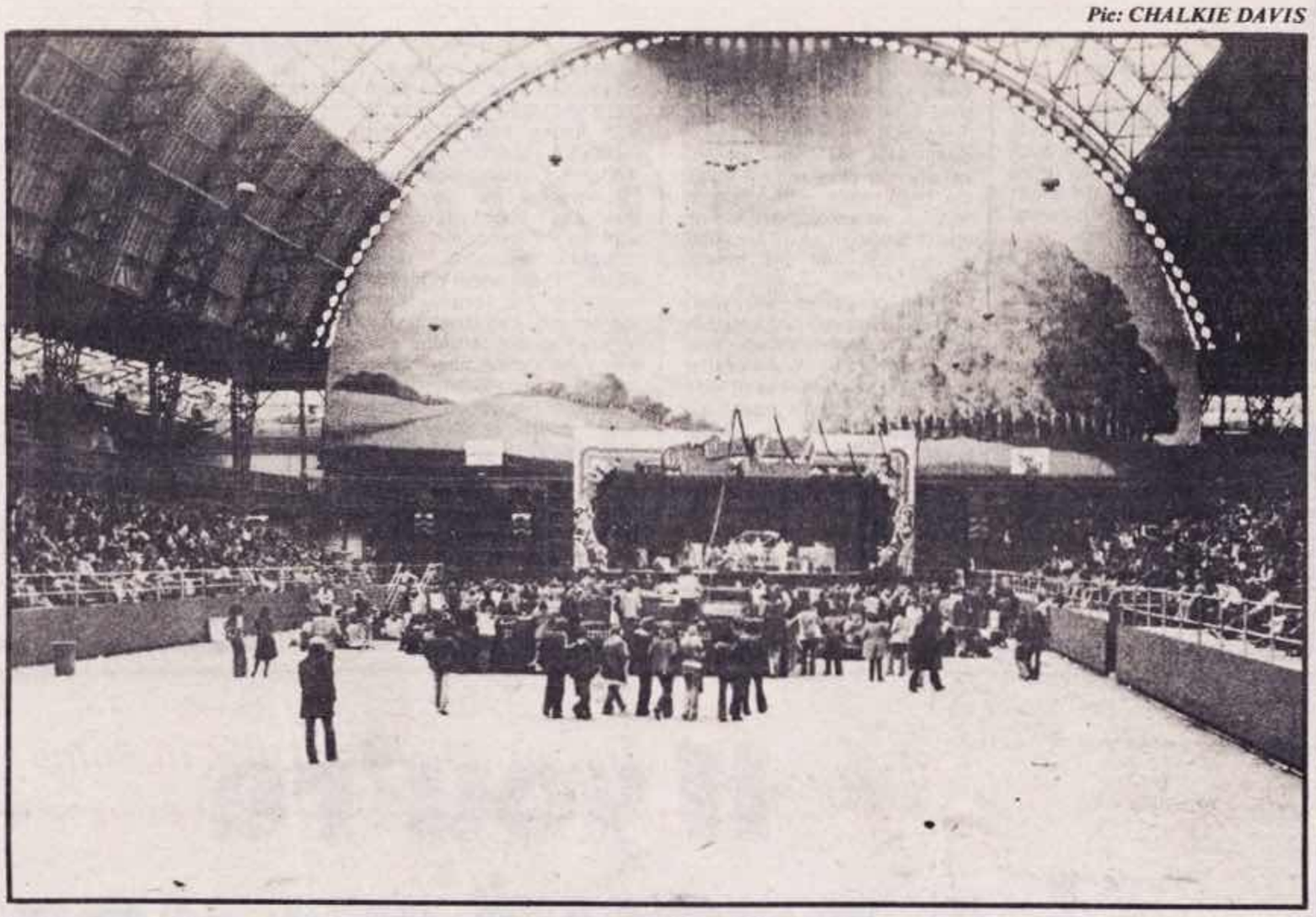
A four-piece, two guitars, bass and drums, three vocalists. Charlie supported The Who at Hammersmith the week previous. Now while their music doesn't come as the proverbial breath of fresh air, they execute their brand of fairly intelligent heavy metal with precision and are obviously well-rehearsed.

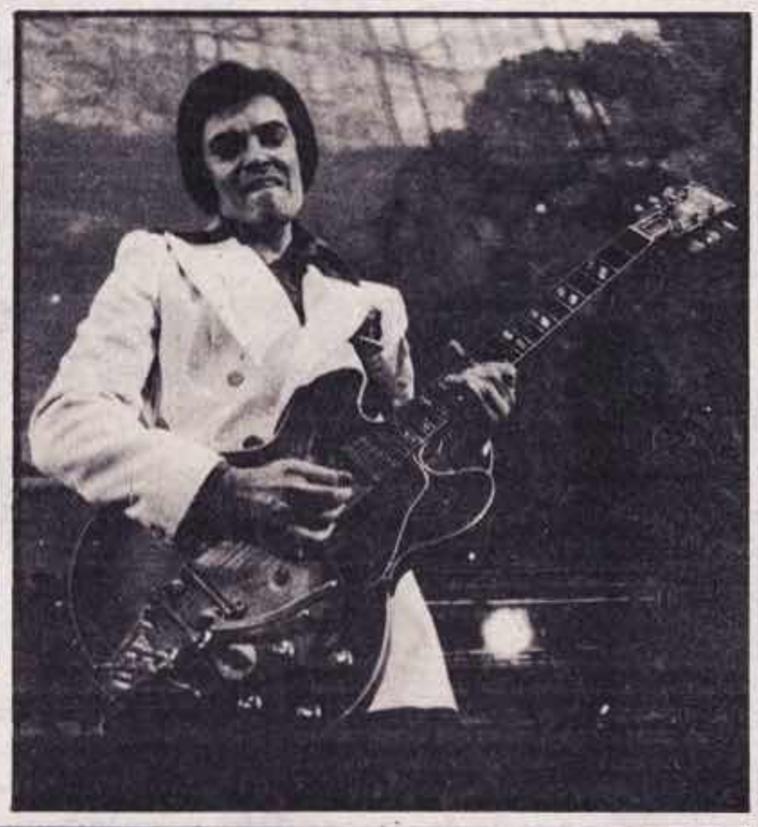
Even if I don't remember much about their songs, I do remember their possessing a certain amount of flair. Charlie could be the Seventies' Wishbone Ash. I wouldn't buy their records, but there's a lot who will.

Be Bop De Luxe go down a storm and they too will sell a few records. Strangely, it was their closing number which really got the audience off, a tedious display of guitarist Bill Nelson's inability to come up with interesting licks for more than a few minutes. True,

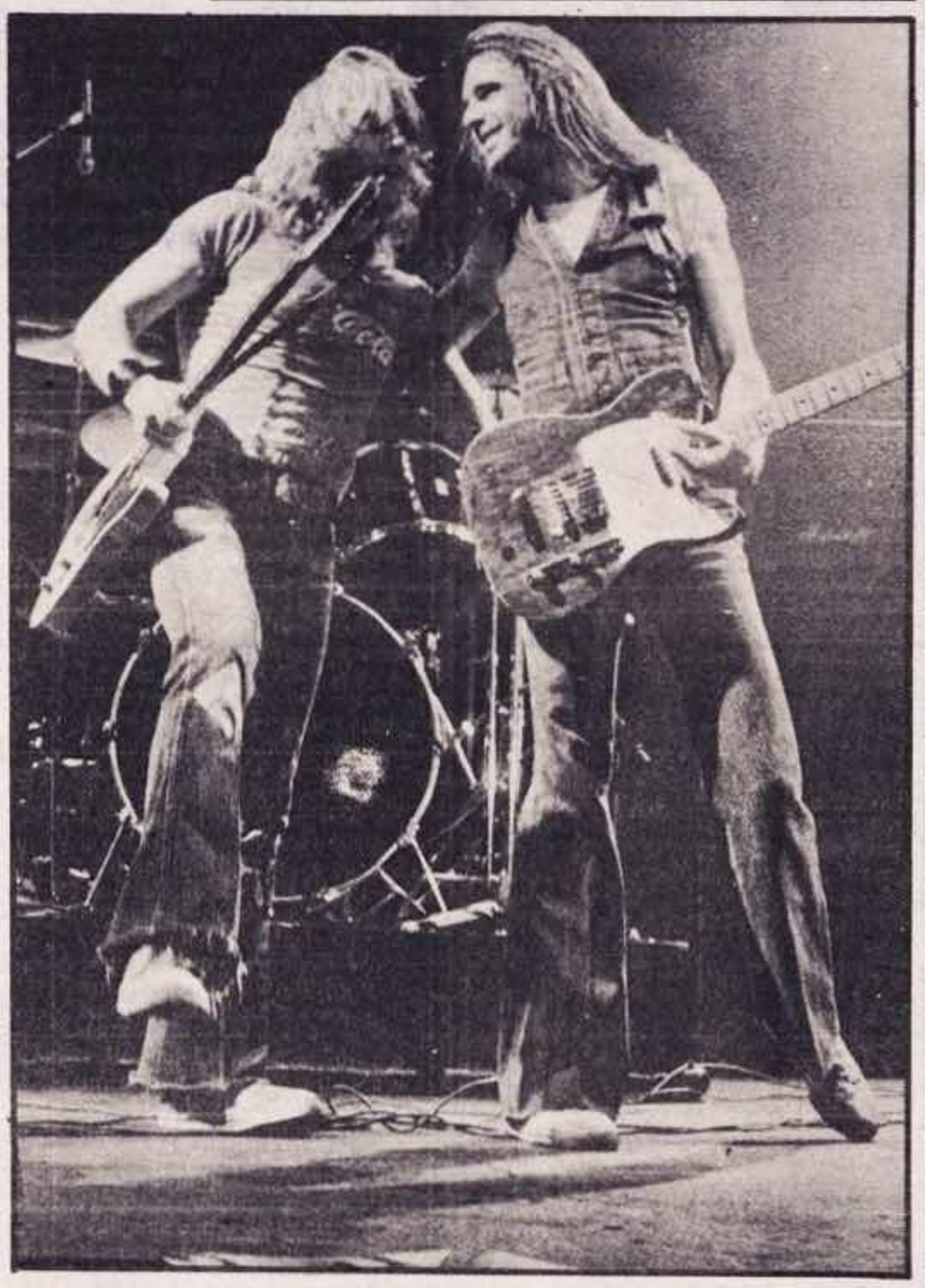
■ *Continues over page*

Pic: CHALKIE DAVIS





Visions of Greatness, clockwise from above: So who turns up to a rock festival on a Wednesday afternoon? Bill Nelson conjuring up seagulls; Quo blowing in '76, still unable to afford new plimsolls; Phil May with some '64 mike action; and lastly, Julie Webb taking in the sights. ***Pix: JOE STEVENS***



ON THE

■ *From previous page*

there's not many guitarists who can but why open yourself to such criticism? Because such old-hat devices never fail to get an audience off, and the longer Nelson soloed the more excited the crowd got.

Bill Nelson plays the cleanest guitar I've ever heard. People say he's the Next Guitar Hero. They could be right. I don't see it though. Certainly he can play very fast, and very slickly and can make the notes sound like a host of seagulls squawking after something to eat, but he's got no feel.

Moreover he seems very conscious of the fact that people think he's a guitar hero. Some of his songs refer to him playing a guitar and several times during the set he held up his sunburst Gibson for the audience to see.

Like his playing, Nelson has a very clean stage persona. The presses in his dark slacks are sharp and his white blazer is immaculate. He seems like an awfully nice chap and his songs are imaginative with a lot of room in the arrangements. The rest of Be Bop Deluxe are good players too and the bassist moves well.

1976 should be their year. But being entirely subjective it was **The Pretty Things** who were the best of these opening acts. Before Saturday they were total strangers to me apart from their Sixties success. Immediately on getting onstage, they had presence and their whole attitude was one of a successful band.

Comparisons between them and Zeppelin are more than feasible. Like Robert Plant, Phil May is a great shouter in the cock-rock tradition, even if he doesn't possess a very great range. Also, one of the band's guitarists plays more than the odd Jimmy Page lick, plays them with conviction too.

One of their new songs "Remember That Boy" from their just-released elpee "Savage Eye", contained a riff straight from Zeppelin's second album. They weren't however content to just keep on repeating the riff, but developed the number so that it didn't come over as something merely second-hand.

One of the Pretty Things' major assets is piano player John Povey, whose playing always stands out whether it's the outrageous boogie of "It's Not Rock 'N Roll" (which it of course was) or his more melodic phrasing on the opening number.

Throughout they played with a surprising freshness considering just how long they've been around, and with a lot of energy. Could 1976 be the year of The Pretty Things re-emergence? Their performance on Saturday has made me want to check out their albums.

Sadly the audience didn't react to the band as enthusiastically as they did to Be Bop Deluxe. You've only got to look at the clothes they wear to realise that Phil May knows more about rock 'n' roll than Bill Nelson.

It just doesn't make sense, but neither does all these kids sitting in this place on a sunny Saturday in January.

Steve Clarke

Ronnie Lane and Slim Chance possess an essentially unfashionable sound: the sound of walking down the front at Clacton eating cockles and whelks and candy floss and wearing Kiss Me Quick hats.

As such it is certainly not suited to the Purgatory That Mel Created.

Lane smiles nonstop, however, and wheels out "One For The Road"; "Debris" from "Ooh La La"; "Ooh La La" itself — complete with Mrs. Lane as can-can girl; "The Poacher"; even LeRoy Van Dyke's "Walk On By".

The fine sense of adenoidal country twang — bolstered by the twin fiddles — remains in his voice to kick ass to the material.

Notwithstanding the insidious strength of the recent material, however, it's the old Small Faces hit, "All Or Nothing", the final number, that goes down best.

In many ways **Nazareth** are the ultimate rip-off band: the Rod Stewartesque "Bad Bad Boy"; the Zeppelinesque workouts of the Yardbirds' "Shapes Of Things To Come" and "This Flight Tonight"; the overall sound of Blue Horizon from Manny Charlton's guitar.

In fact, Nazareth are even more *esque* and *oid* than Budgie.

Even so, here they are second on the bill to Bad Company and phenomenally loud and apparently injecting more sheer joy into the audience than they've felt since Status Quo tore the place apart on the first night.

"Supersonic" star Dan McCafferty bares his chest — of course — and Manny wears his football sweater well and plays some tempting slide and Olympia goes *nuts*.

I thought they'd blown it somehow, you know. In fact, "My White Bicycle" notwithstanding I'd been fairly convinced that Nazareth were finished as a live attraction in this country.

Not so at all apparently.

The slow blues "Guilty", with very tasty guitar from Charlton, I even thoroughly enjoy, even if I cringe every time Dan purrs his brogue into the mike and mutters darkly about doing "naughty things" like sleeping with people before you're married.

Really, though, I suppose Nazareth's sound is quintessential (ho-hum) Heavy *Pop:* the sound of dry ice flowing on TOTP.

Before talking about **Bad Company,** let us consider the defunct Free.

Free had all the angles refined. They played well on stage. *And* they knew how to make good records. Indeed, they not only played well but they were good players. They also understood the necessity to provide *Charisma* — check out the "Fire And Water" cover shot — which meant that girls were able to like them as well as their great-coated young men.

Plus Paul Rodgers' voice is one of *the* classic Third Generation rock voices. Cinemascope power and range. And sexy with it.

That considered, it must also be said that Bad Company are just another Free permutation. And with that considered, being a Free permutation isn't too bad a thing to be.

Except that so far — and even Steve Clarke will go along with this — Bad Company haven't managed to make very good records. Successful they may have been, but very, very boring too. Live, though, they're believed to be more than a slight improvement on their records.

But not tonight, I'm afraid.

Bad Company have, of course, just spent a vast amount of time both living and playing in the States. US audiences get off on bands a lot faster — and with far less necessity for the bands to actually work on them — than do British audiences. Bad Com-

● *Continued on page 30*

Who was that masked Polack? Chris Salewicz buys a drink.

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NME1

TOWN

DOG DAY AFTERNOON

Starring: Al Pacino. Directed by Sidney Lumet

NEW YORK, New York

So there were these two guys, see, robbing this bank in Brooklyn one hot afternoon in August of '72.

One of them's decked out in a pimp suit and boasts long hair and a lugubrious expression, while the other has a crumpled white shirt, chino pants and is played by Al Pacino.

They are klutzes, but nevertheless they are armed and therefore dangerous.

Now, there's hardly any bread in the bank, but nevertheless they're holding the manager, the black security man and a whole flock of tellers to ransom. Outside the FBI, the N.Y.P.D. and eight million media men are going avocado. There's TV cameras trained on the bank, ther's snipers on the rooftops, dragnets, phone interviews, delivery boys schlepping pizza to the scene of the crime (ordered on the house by the police but paid for as a gesture of Steve Reeves-type bravado by Sonny, the Pacino character), squawking Yiddishe mommas, transvestites, a whole megillah you wouldn't *believe*, Jim.

New York, New York.

The thing is that "Dog Day Afternoon" is based on events that really occurred, which switches it from being either just another comment on the recent development of siege-as-an-artform that various assiduous crazies have been working on this year, or another screwball-comedy-with-a-sting-in-the-ol'-tailarooskie. Yes, Virginia, there actually *was* a guy whacko enough to rob a bank to pay for his male wife's sex-change operation, and yes, his momma did show up at the scene of the crime to beg her son to change his mind and turn himself in, and things did get loose enough inside the bank itself for the hostages to start playing with Sonny's gun. And yes, the police did solve the case at the last minute by blowing a neat little hole in the skull of Sonny's deranged buddy (John Cazale) at the airport just as they were about to board their jumbo jet to Algeria.

Take it in the ass, Horatio. Life is still deal weirder than fiction.

Meet your friendly neighborhood bank-robber

Sidney Lumet was never exactly one of those directors whose name you'd want to wear on a T-shirt, but he builds the whole tottering edifice of mounting absurdity with exemplary control and pacing, while Pacino adds another scalp to his rapidly-becoming-overcrowded belt with his portrayal of Sonny, a screwed-up loser going for broke, suddenly finding himself a big man in front of TV crews beaming his live all over the city, fencing with the police and FBI, wielding the powers of life and death over the hostages in the bank, alternately klutzing and grandstanding.

Cazale's monosyllabic Keatonesque psycho is more than moderately arresting, while Chris Sarandon comes within a whisker of heisting the whole movie out from under Pacino as the tranked-up transvestite.

Sarandon's killer scene comes during a phone conversation between Sonny in the bank and the male wife in the insurance office across the street, talking under the watchful eye of Moretti, the bull-dog-like police sergeant realising that his whole caper is his last chance to make lieutenant.

Every dog, as they say, has his day. The real-life Sonny is currently serving a twenty-year sentence, his lover is now a woman somewhere in New York (keep cruising those singles bars and you might get lucky) and his wife, caricatured unmercifully in the movie, was — last I heard — still trying to get some bread out of the movie company.

Acting as a dumbo Greek Chorus is the crowd gathered outside the bank. Alternately cheering Sonny for his "Attica! Attica!" milking of a top radical riff of the time, reviling him as a faggot and — later — spawning a gay lib demonstration, they act as the Voice of New York, and if you don't think thats relevant, dig it — it couldn't happen here.

All they'd get here would be a coupla shots in the *Mirror* and a two-minute flash on the *News At Ten*.

"Dog Day Afternoon" is a killer. After all, it may look weird to you, but to Sonny and his real-life precursor it was just another day. Albeit the day that a street loser made the headlines.

Charles Shaar Murray

Al Padno: his boyfriend got the sex-change; he got 20 years

BARRY LYNDON

Starring Ryan O'Neil. Directed by Stanley Kubrick

"FOR THE benefit of those who like to know what a picture is about," wrote the New York Times of a minor Bogart film, "we can only say that 'Men Are Such Fools' is about an hour too long."

"Barry Lyndon" is about three-and-a-quarter hours too long, a succession of visual compositions so slavishly stylised and so resolutely self-conscious — every frame a potential still life — that the narrative's already leisurely pace degenerates into a barely animated crawl around the pastoral and gracious living sections of an art gallery.

Stanley Kubrick's interpretation of Thackeray, on whose novel 'The Luck Of Barry Lyndon' the film is based, forsakes the author's punctilious moralising (there are only gentle prods in Michael Hordern's urbane narration) for a world in which lovers give each other long measured looks on cool mentholated walks or in exquisitely ordered drawing rooms; a world in which the camera is forever moving away from a close-up to place figures against verdant panoramic backgrounds; a world in which a fist fight, or even an orgy, is reduced to just another tableau.

In such a suffocating setting, the story — which traces the rise and fall of a fortune-hunting Irish opportunist in 18th-century Europe — becomes little more than a stylistic convenience and the characters within it mere stooges.

So it's hardly surprising that Ryan O'Neal, struggling bravely with an accent that's plainly alien to him, wanders through the film with an expression of such terminal hangdog melancholia that the grey hair he's allocated to indicate advancing years gives him the look of a man who's going to worry himself to death.

Only towards the end of the film, as misfortunes proliferate and Kubrick limits his lyricism to an occasional misty long-shot of the palatial home, is O'Neal given the chance to convey any emotion, an opportunity he seizes admirably to deliver at least one genuinely poignant moment.

Marisa Berenson's muted, inexpressive dreariness is lingered upon lovingly, to little effect. Only a twitchy, assertive performance by Leon Vitali as Barry's stepson, and amusing cameos from Patrick Magee and Leonard Rossiter remain in the memory.

Ultimately, "Barry Lyndon"s liability lies not so much in its sluggish pace (one of last year's most compelling films, Antonioni's "The Passenger", wasn't exactly a speed-trap), nor in the ostentatious grandeur of its landscapes (point the finger at any western), but in its paucity of real inspiration.

As the director of "2001", "A Clockwork Orange" and the masterful "Dr. Strangelove", Kubrick should know the difference between real inspiration and the glib, witless, liquidised soporific that is "Barry Lyndon".

Quite simply, it's the kind of film that gives romanticism a bad name.

Al Clark

Caught and Shark

JAWS

Starring: Richard Dreyfus, Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw. Directed by Steven Spielberg

POPULAR CINEMA is thinning out.

In the Twenties and Thirties the ideal was variety — a pile of plot, a stack of script, an almost continuous drone of musical "colour". To convey this weight of information within the ninety-minute attention-span decreed for the burgeoning technological mass-audience required a high delivery speed; thus, actors spoke unnaturally fast and left the expression of character nuances to a small stock of facial semaphore-signals

In 1975, the attention-span is, if anything, larger — yet speaking-scripts have shrunk to about a third of their former size and the musical "colour" (which ceased to function continuously around the time that acting got more detailed and the weight of popular simplicity shifted to the plot) now sometimes consists of little more than periodic repetition of a theme-tune.

Whereas, previously, the plot of a movie was the performance and the actors mere cult "presences" (Cagney, Bogart), now the actors are performers (Hackman, Nicholson) and the presence is all in the plot.

Deep Throat part two?

In other words the "sensational" part of popular cinema's appeal has become the Thing, not the Hero. The "hook" element of a commercial blockbuster is no longer the presence of a favourite performer, or star, but the presence of a single overpowering proposition — e.g., an ocean liner turns upside down, a tall building catches fire, an entire underground train is hijacked.

"See what happens" is the invitation, not "Further-prolong-your-fantasy-relationship-with-Robert-Redford-or-whoever."

As in previous Decades of Anxiety, the mass-audience is donning the insulation of impersonal sensation. Visual action-sequences — like those of the thirties' "King Kong" and the fifties' Cold War S.F. movies — are no longer embedded in a big moneyspinner's star-dominated story-line; now, stars fade into the background of the main concern: sensational action.

There's a lot of sensational action in "Jaws". At one point Spielberg pulls off a coup of shock cinema that ejects at least half the audience out of their seats, causing an upsurge of gratefully-shared wailing and gibbering that blots out the soundtrack chat completely for nearly a minute.

But who cares if you can't hear what Richard Dreyfuss and Roy Scheider are saying to each other? It's not "The Maltese Falcon", for Chrissake.

Today's popular moviemakers steer clear of demanding too much from their audience's conscious mind in case that blows the direct line to sensation.

The "Jaws" sensation, like those of the disaster movies alluded to above, is orgasmic — the sexuality of gratifying fear and gratifying destruction. There we are, in the opening sequence, fascinated by a naked girl being dragged to and fro along the surface of a calm midnight ocean by an unseen thing.

When the Cinema of the Star gives way to the Cinema of the Thing, you know you're in a Depression.

However, in 1975, speed is no longer obligatory. The early cinema audience was pelted with lines and theatrics and musical "colour" on the precept that it had to be fast to attract their attention; these days speed saturates our environment and most audiences want to relax.

This leaves the performer somewhat stranded. How do you perform (or even, with the aid of your own carefully-developed semaphore signals, assert your "presence") if you only get ten minutes talking-time over two hours?

The problem becomes a technical one. The scriptwriters have only a few seconds here and there to verbally semaphore a character-nuance and, since this isn't Antonioni, the solution has to be highly-simplified people. The nice touch in today's films is that the simplification must be contemporary, not corny, and the result — in "Jaws" at least — is that characters express their complex humanity by sniggering and guffawing at moments of high tension, instead of gripping a handy prop and looking moody.

There are only two more drawbacks: Robert Shaw as Robert Newton as Captain Ahab, balladic blarney and all — and the rather obvious rubber-constituent of the Star during his final sexual assault on Mr. Shaw's shark-huntin' vessel. Apart from that, it's sensational entertainment.

No, make that Sensational Entertainment.

Ian MacDonald

JAZZ DIARY

MORE MILESTONE releases from the now defunct Riverside catalogue. Clark Terry's "Cruising" is the pick of the bunch, comprising tracks from the old "Serenade To A Bus Seat" album with Johnny "In Orbit" with Thelonious Monk, and "Duke With A Difference" featuring Terry with Hodges, Gonsalves and Co.

Also out, Cannonball Adderley's Japanese Concerts, plenty flavoulites like "Work Song" and "Jive Samba" played by The Ball, Nat, Lateef and Zawinul.

Bobby Timmons' "Moaning' " re-releases all the old soul strutters like "This Here" and "Dat Dere" and conjures up that byegone age when soul meant instrumentals or the odd prelate. "Pretty Blue" features guitarist Wes Montgomery up the sugary end with a gang of strings.

Milestone plan to record McCoy Tyner with a full string orchestra too; let's hope they dig a little Eddie Sauter first.

According to Warne Marsh, the Danes who brought him over to Europe are negotiating to import Art Pepper. Art is healthy and blowing straight ahead also again, so the news can be nothing less the expoobident.

Four jazz concerts have been fixed for the newly opened Haringey Arts Centre, kicking off with Trevor Watts' Amalgam on January 31. Advance booking from the JCS office.

The Cedar Walton Quartet looks interesting — George Coleman sat all the way down with Miles, the tenor between Mobley and Shorter. The rhythm section have played with just about everybody. The Chris Barber appearance at 100 Club is his last before a lengthy European tour of Holland, Germany and Switzerland.

Final flash: Contemporary Records are exporting again which means Ornette Rollins, Art Pepper, Curtis Counce, Cecil T and Harold Land over the counter again, and me in hock.

THURSDAY

COVENT GARDEN 7 Dials Club: DON RENDELL QUINTET — BARBARA THOMPSON
LONDON W.1. Ronnie Scott Club: GEORGE MELLY-/JOHN CHILTON FEETWARMERS + RONNIE SCOTT
OLDHAM Birch Hall County Club: CHRIS BARBER JAZZ & BLUES BAND

SATURDAY

BATTERSEA Town Hall Community Centre: REGGAE AND DANCE WORKSHOP
OXFORD STREET 100 Club: JUBULA
RICKMANSWORTH Watersmeet Theatre: CHRIS BARBER JEB BAND
STOCKWELL The Plough: JOHN STEVENS / TREVOR WATTS / LINDSEY COOPER

SUNDAY

BATTERSEA Town Hall: Soul and Reggae concert
OXFORD STREET 100 Club: **CHRIS BARBER / ROYAL GARDEN JAZZ MEN.** See Diary
STOCKWELL The Plough: BRIAN SPRING TRIO + GUEST

MONDAY

BATTERSEA Town Hall: JAZZ FILMS
OXFORD STREET 100 Club: GENE ALLAN JAZZMEN
STOKE ON TRENT George Hotel, Burslem: RED PRICE /JOHNNY ROTHERHAM TRIO
WALTHAMSTOW Brewery Tap: PETE HURT BIG BAND

TUESDAY

LONDON W.1. Ronnie Scott Club: CEDAR WALTON QUARTET — GEORGE COLEMAN tenor: BILLY HIGGINS drums, SAM JONES bass. See Diary
OXFORD STREET 100 Club: GEORGIA JAZZ BAND TUESDAY
LONDON N.1. Sussex Arms, Culford Street: HACKNEY JAZZ SOCIETY — MIKE OSBORNE TRIO

WEDNESDAY

BASILDON Sweeneys: NUCLEUS
BETHNAL GREEN Rochelle School, Club Row: JCS WORKSHOP — JOHN STEVENS
HOLLAND, ROTTERDAM Harbow Jazz Club: CHRIS BARBER JAZZ & BLUES BAND
OXFORD CIRCUS The Phoenix, Cavendish Square: BOB DOWNES OPEN MUSIC
OXFORD STREET 100 Club: ACKER BILK + NEVILLE DICKIE TRIO
PADDINGTON Sarah Siddons School: JCS REHEARSAL BIG BAND

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GIGGLES
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Mon. 12th Jan. Adm. 65p
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Plus Friends & Jerry Floyd

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KURSAAL FLYERS
Plus Eddie & The Hot Rods
D.J. Jerry Floyd

Wed. 14th Jan. Adm. 60p
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Plus Guests and Jerry Floyd

Thurs. 15th Jan. Adm. 60p
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Plus Support and Ian Fleming

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Friday, 16th January
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present on Saturday, January 17th
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+ *RACING CARS* + HOBO
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FRI. JAN. 9	**NIGHT LIFE**
SAT. JAN. 10	**UPROAR**

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CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC S.U.
Fairholt House, 102-105 Whitechapel High St., E.1
Friday, Jan. 9th, 7.30 p.m.
BAND CALLED "O"
John St. Field
Tickets 60p Advance. 70p on Night
Tube: ALDGATE EAST

NEW VICTORIA THEATRE
ROBIN GEE FOR S.C.A. PRESENTS
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AND HIS BAND + HOBO
FRIDAY, 23rd JANUARY at 7.30 p.m.
TICKETS £2.00, £1.50, £1.00
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FRIARS AT THE VALE HALL AYLESBURY
SATURDAY, JANUARY 10th 7.30 p.m.
THE BLACK FLAME OCEAN GYPSIES
RENAISSANCE
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GRYPHON
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Tickets 110p from Earth Records, Aylesbury; K & M, Buckingham; Derek's, H.W.; Hearsay, H.H., F. L. Moore, Luton or 110p at the door on night. Life membership 25p. Into 1976 with Street Punk Rock'n'Roll, Majestic Violins and a Saucerful of Secrets.

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WORDS & THE DACORUM DISTRICT COUNCIL PRESENTS
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SUTHERLAND BROS. & QUIVER
+ HUMAN ORCHESTRA
Sounds Bar Food
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£1.20 on the door

KINGSTON POLY ENTS
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Sunday, 11th January at
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SUTHERLAND BROTHERS & QUIVER
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SUNDAY, JANUARY 11th at 8:30p.m.
Tickets – £1·50, £1·25, £1·00 From B.O. 834-1317

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

COMPILED BY DEREK JOHNSON

● *symbol denotes gig details in centre panel*

THURSDAY

BEDFORD Angel Hotel: PETER & CHRISTINE COE
DERBY Cleopatra's: DIRTY TRICKS
ERDINGTON Queen's Head: HOOKER
FOLKESTONE: Toby House: FOUNDATIONS
HIGH WYCOMBE Nags Head: EAST OF EDEN
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: F.B.I.
LONDON CHARING X RD. Sundown: BETHNAL
LONDON DRURY LANE New London Theatre: BRUCE FORSYTH
LONDON ENFIELD Middlesex Polytechnic: STRETCH
LONDON EUSTON ROAD Bettina's: RICH MITZI
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: JAILBAIT
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: DIVERSIONS
LONDON Marquee Club: MICK ABRAHAMS BAND
MANCHESTER Golden Garter: CLEO LAINE & JOHN DANKWORTH
MANSFIELD Horse & Jockey: PLUMMET AIR LINES
NOTTINGHAM Imperial Hotel: MENSCH
NOTTINGHAM Town Hall: PROCOL HARUM
OLDHAM Birch Hall Country Club: CHRIS BARBER BLUES BAND
PENZANCE Winter Gardens: KURSAAL FLYERS
PORTSMOUTH Guildhall: BLACK SABBATH ●
TREFOREST Glamorgan Polytechnic: SASSAFRAS ●
WALSALL Spiders Web: BAND CALLED CHARLIE
WENTWORTH Rockingham Arms: BRIAN DEWHURST

FRIDAY

BARROW Maxim's: LIVERPOOL EXPRESS
BARWELL Constitutional Club: BAND CALLED CHARLIE
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD ●
BIRMINGHAM Town Hall: PROCOL HARUM
BRADFORD College of Education: JAILBAIT
BRENTWOOD Hermit House: SNATCH
CLEVELAND Lazenby Social Club: ROY BAILEY
CROMER Links Pavilion: HEAVY METAL KIDS/KAV
DERBY College of Technology: GOOD HABIT
EDINBURGH University: RONNIE LANE AND SLIM CHANCE ●
FAREHAM Technical College: FRUUPP ●
IPSWICH Gaumont: BLACK SABBATH ●
KNARESBOROUGH Folk Club: TONY & MANDY
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: POODLES/RAZOR BACKS
LONDON ENFIELD Salisbury Arms: BETHNAL
LONDON EUSTON RD. Bettina's: NIGHT LIFE
LONDON Imperial College: 101-ers
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope and Anchor: PLUMMET AIRLINES
LONDON ISLINGTON Kings Head: CAMDEN GOODS
LONDON Marquee Club: GRAHAM BELL'S STOTTS
LONDON North-East Polytechnic: DIRTY TRICKS
LONDON REGENTS PARK The Howff: HI-TONES
MARLOW Crown Hotel: LEE KOSMIN BAND
MATLOCK Black Rocks: SARABAND
NELSON Nelson's Column: CURVED AIR ●
NEWCASTLE Polytechnic: SNAFU ●
RICKMANSWORTH Watersmeet Theatre: CHRIS BARBER BLUES BAND
STAFFORD North Staffs Polytechnic: MICKEY JUPP BAND
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD Golden Diamond: ALBERTO Y LOST TRIOS PARANOIAS
SWINDON College: KURSAAL FLYERS
WESTHAUGHTON Red Lion: BRIAN DEWHURST

SATURDAY

AYLESBURY Friars at Vale Hall: RENAISSANCE /GRYPHON ●
BARWELL Constitutional Club: BAND CALLED CHARLIE
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: BEAU FLYER
BRIGHTON Polytechnic: MICKEY JUPP BAND
CLACTON Westcliff Hotel: BETHNAL
CROMER Links Pavilion: JAILBAIT
DONCASTER Freewheeling Folk Club: MICK ELLIOT
DUNSTABLE California: CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD ●
FOLKESTONE Leas Cliff Hall: PRETTY THINGS ●
GLASGOW Strathclyde University: RONNIE LANE AND SLIM CHANCE ●
HARLOW Technical College: SASSAFRAS ●
HIGH WYCOMBE Town Hall: FRUUPP ●
KESWICK Royal Oak: BRIAN DEWHURST
LEICESTER Gypsy Lane W.M.C.: MATCHBOX
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: PALM BEACH EXPRESS
LONDON DRURY LANE New London Theatre: BRUCE FORSYTH
LONDON EUSTON RD. Bettina's: UPROAR
LONDON Imperial College: JIVE BOMBERS
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: JIVE BOMBERS
LONDON Marquee Club: GIGGLES
LONDON REGENTS PARK The Howff: HI-TONES
LOUGHBOROUGH University: STEVE MARRIOTT'S ALL STARS / RACING CARS
LUTON The Favourite: TEQUILA
MATLOCK Black Rocks: AGNES STRANGE
NELSON Nelson's Column: STRAY
NORTHAMPTON County Ground: SNAFU ● /DIRTY TRICKS
NOTTINGHAM University: CURVED AIR ●
PAIGNTON Penelope's: STRETCH
SOUTHEND Kursaal: BLACK SABBATH ●
WEST RUNTON Village Hall: THE REAL THING
WOOLMER Castle: THE INVADERS

SUNDAY

BIRMINGHAM Odeon: BLACK SABBATH ●
BRENTWOOD Hermit House: JOHN & AUDREY LINCOLN
BRIDGEND Drones (doubling **GORSEINON** Rainbow Rooms): CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD ●
CROYDON Greyhound: RENAISSANCE ●
EPPING Blacksmith's Arms: PIGSTY HILL LIGHT ORCHESTRA
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD Pavilion: CURVED AIR ●

ANNIE HASLAM of Renaissance

BUCK OWENS

A Gig Guide special to celebrate the introduction of the Sex Discrimination Act

Highlights this week

THINGS ARE looking up following the stagnation which afflicted the gig circuit immediately after Christmas. The aggregate number of gigs is still low, because most of the colleges are still on vacation. But the rock-biz is beginning to stir again, and during the next seven days we have no fewer than ten new tours getting under way, plus the renewal of two other tours which started in the late autumn. These are they:

● **BLACK SABBATH toured Britain extensively a couple of months ago, but had to cancel a few of their gigs because of illness. Now these have been rescheduled and, at the same time, some new dates have been added. The end result is a brand new mini-tour which takes in Portsmouth (Thursday), Ipswich (Friday), Southend (Saturday), Birmingham (Sunday) and London Hammersmith (Tuesday).**

● **SASSAFRAS were last on the road as recently as December, when they were part of the "Hot On The Trails" package with A Band Called 'O' and Randy Pie. But now they're embarking upon a lengthy schedule in their own right, extending through to the end of March. Initial gigs are at Treforest (Thursday) and Harlow (Saturday).**

● **CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD are spearheading the 1976 American invasion by way of a hectic month-long tour. They are always welcome visitors to these shores, and their comprehensive itinerary opens with visits to Birmingham (Friday), Dunstable (Saturday), Bridgend and Gorseinon (Sunday), Halesowen and Nottingham (Monday), Preston (Tuesday) and Ilford and London (Wednesday).**

● **RONNIE LANE sets out on the road this weekend, amid widespread speculation that he may become part of the Small Faces, if and when they re-form. So Old Moore may be predicting this as the last-ever tour by Slim Chance, although we suspect that Lane himself would dispute that. Catch them at Edinburgh (Friday), Glasgow (Saturday) and Sheffield (Wednesday).**

● **SNAFU toured Britain extensively in the autumn as support act to Nazareth, but now they're going out on their own solo trek. They open at Newcastle (Friday), then visit Northampton (Saturday), with further gigs following until the end of the month.**

● **RENAISSANCE played a few isolated gigs in Britain during 1975, but for the most part they've been working in the States, where they've built up a very considerable reputation — as shown by their three sell-out Carnegie Hall concerts in June. Now they're going back on the road here at home, starting in Aylesbury (Saturday) and Croydon (Sunday).**

● **PRETTY THINGS, who were appearing in the Olympia festival last weekend, are now about to begin an eight-venue tour. Object of the exercise is to promote their new album "Savage Eye", and you can cast your own eye on them at Folkestone (Saturday) and London Twickenham (Sunday).**

● **BUCK OWENS is the second U.S. visitor to grace these shores in '76, and the veteran Nashville entertainer is bringing over his long-standing backing group, the Buckaroos. He'll be supported on most gigs by recent "Opportunity Knocks" winners Frank Jennings and Syndicate, and the first two dates are at Wolverhampton (Sunday) and London's Albert Hall (Tuesday).**

● **NUCLEUS open a country-wide tour in Basildon on Wednesday, and Ian Carr and his cohorts will be presenting a new act built around material from their recent "Alley Cat" album.**

● **ACE are undertaking their first British tour since they returned from their highly successful U.S. concert series with Yes, and they open in Plymouth on Wednesday.**

● **FRUUPP started their U.K. tour back in December, but interrupted it in order to play a string of gigs in their native Ireland during the Christmas period. Now they're back on the road again in this country, with dates at Fareham (Friday) and High Wycombe (Saturday).**

● **CURVED AIR have hardly been off the road in the autumn, but their gigs have all fared so well that they have now booked a further string for January. They begin on Friday when they open a brand new venue in Nelson, then play Nottingham (Saturday) and Hemel Hempstead (Sunday).**

● **SUTHERLAND BROS. & QUIVER headline the outstanding one-off event of the week, when they star in a major London concert on Sunday. Support act is Starry Eyed & Laughing — whom it's good to see back in circulation again.**

RONNIE LANE

BOBBY HARRISON of Snafu

CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD

IAN CARR of Nucleus

ILFORD General Havelock: MIKE ABSALOM
KINGSTON Coronation Hall: KURSAAL FLYERS
LEICESTER Gypsy Lane W.M.C.: MATCHBOX
LIVERPOOL Centre Hotel: BRIAN DEWHURST /TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: STRANGLERS
LONDON KINGSBURY Bandwagon: BETHNAL
LONDON Marquee Club: NOVA
LONDON PECKHAM Newlands Tavern: LEE KOSMIN BAND
LONDON TWICKENHAM Winning Post: PRETTY THINGS ●
LONDON Victoria Palace: SUTHERLAND BROTHERS & QUIVER/STARRY EYED & LAUGHING ●
MANCHESTER Middleton Civic Hall: JASPER CARROTT
OXFORD New Theatre: PROCOL HARUM
ROMFORD Albemarle Club: KRAZY KAT
TROWELL Festival Inn: BAND CALLED CHARLIE
WOLVERHAMPTON Civic Hall: BUCK OWENS & THE BUCKAROOS ●

MONDAY

BRENTWOOD Hermit House: ALL THINGS NEW
DEAL Astor Theatre: BETHNAL
DONCASTER Outlook Club: NEIL INNES & FATSO
HALESOWEN Tiffany's (doubling **NOTTINGHAM** La Chic): CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD ●
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: TEQUILA
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: ROOGALATOR
LONDON Marquee Club: CAROL GRIMES' LONDON BOOGIE BAND
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD Golden Diamond: WALLY

TUESDAY

CROYDON Fairfield Hall: DOROTHY SQUIRES
HUDDERSFIELD Ivanhoe's: NEIL INNES & FATSO
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: ROOGALATOR
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: PLUMMET AIRLINES
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Odeon: BLACK SABBATH ●
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: PALM BEACH EXPRESS
LONDON Marquee Club: KURSAAL FLYERS/EDDIE & THE HOT RODS
LONDON Royal Albert Hall: BUCK OWENS & THE BUCKAROOS / FRANK JENNINGS & SYNDICATE ●
LONDON 100 Club: ROOGALOTOR / JIVE BOMBERS / BOOMBAYA
MEXBOROUGH Jesters: RICKY VALLANCE /SILVER LINING
NETHER HEYFORD Old Sun Folk Club: MIRIAM BACKHOUSE
NOTTINGHAM Calverton Springwater Club: MAGNUM OPUS II
PRESTON Park Hall: CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD ●

WEDNESDAY

BASILDON Sweeney's: IAN CARR'S NUCLEUS ●
BIRMINGHAM Elizabethan Rock: HOOKER
COVENTRY College of Education: SUPERCHARGE
CROYDON Fairfield Hall: FRANKIE VAUGHAN
GRANTHAM Kesteven College: STRETCH
ILFORD King's Club (doubling LONDON Speakeasy): CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARD ●
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: DIVERSIONS
LONDON CHELSEA College: BOB DAVENPORT
LONDON FULHAM Greyhound: PLUMMET AIRLINES
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: RACING CARS
LONDON Marquee Club: DIRTY TRICKS
LONDON W.1 Gulliver's Club: THE REAL THING
NEWPORT Scamps Disco: BAND CALLED CHARLIE
PLYMOUTH Fiesta Suite: ACE ●
RHYL St. Asaph Stables: LIVERPOOL EXPRESS
SHEFFIELD Polytechnic: RONNIE LANE & SLIM CHANCE ●

RESIDENCIES

BATLEY Variety Club: CHAMPAGNE
Week from Sunday
BEDFORD Nite Spot: BARRON KNIGHTS
Tuesday (13) for five days
BIRMINGHAM La Dolce Vita: BIG JOHN'S ROCK 'N' ROLL CIRCUS
Week from Sunday
BLACKBURN Cavendish: SHAKIN'STEVENS & THE SUNSETS
Week from Sunday
CHESTERFIELD Aquarius: COOL BREEZE
Week from Sunday, except Monday
DERBY Bailey's: NEW VAUDEVILLE BAND
Week from Sunday
LEICESTER Bailey's: GEORGIE FAME & THE BLUE FLAMES
Week from Sunday
LONDON CAMDEN Nero's: JIMMY JAMES & THE VAGABONDS
Week from Sunday
LONDON Ronnie Scott's Club: CEDAR WALTON QUARTET / SURPRISE SISTERS
NEWCASTLE La Dolce Vita: WICKED LADY
Week from Sunday
OLDHAM Bailey's: BLACK ABBOTS
Week from Sunday
PURFLEET Circus Tavern: JACK JONES
Week from Sunday
REDCAR Southbank Sporting Club: LIGHT FANTASIC
Thursday (8) for three days
STOKE Bailey's: SETTLERS
Week from Sunday
WAKEFIELD Theatre Club: HOLLIES
Week from Sunday
WATFORD Bailey's: CILLA BLACK
Week from Sunday

TOWN

● *Continued from page 26*

pany appeared to have forgotten this.

There is also the problem of the venue. In its present form — even with the vibed up stage decor — this Olympia hall is still close to the kiss of death for a rock'n'roll band.

And also there's the problem of the surprise success of Nazareth and their high energy music which has just preceded Bad Co.

But anyway they come out and start off nice and slow and low-key with "Good Lovin' Gone Bad" with Rodgers in his classic mike-stand grabbing pose.

And after the number ends the reception is not perhaps what they might have expected.

Anyway they continue.

The playing is fairly flawless: Mick Ralphs' guitar playing fizzes, sparkles, crunches. He never plays a note too many nor a note too few. Perhaps this is why a very good musician undersells himself in the audience's mind and ends up sounding most unremarkable. Simon Kirke is crisp and perfunctory and almost seems to be attempting a definition of "the drummer in the driving seat". Certainly he's the best player in Bad Company this evening even if he is almost invisible behind the kit.

Boz Burrell must be very pleased that one day Robert Fripp said, "What? You can't play bass guitar? Never mind. I'll teach you." His bass bristles with occasional fire.

And Rodgers plays not only voice but also acoustic and electric guitars — some tasty duelling with Ralphs on "Can't Get Enough Of Your Love" — and electric piano.

Even so it doesn't really happen, and though a lot of shoulders may be shifted in time to a lot of riffs, the most interesting and pleasurable moments are the harmonies from Boz and Ralphs.

Actually, I'd better come clean about it. It's so lacklustre and so predictable that I almost walk out.

Now Bad Company obviously realise that all is perhaps not well.

Ralphs himself even remarks to the audience that they're a bit quiet. And none of the band looks particularly happy.

So they work hard after Rodgers has played a fairly beautiful "Seagull" solo on acoustic, and most of the audience appears to get off on the last half hour of the set.

But I was very disappointed. No *magic*, you see. None whatsoever.

Oh, hang on, I just telephoned Joe Stevens, who went on the Saturday night. The first thing he says about Bad Company is that there was a lot of *magic*.

Friday night was one of those nights, I guess.

Chris Salewicz

TV/RADIO

BE-BOP DELUXE, fancied by many for stardom in 1976, take a step in the right direction on Tuesday when they're featured in BBC-2's *Old Grey Whistle Test*. Also on the bill, and equally deserving a break is **Aj Webber.**

Steeleye Span have a couple of spots on the box during the coming week. They guest, together with **Glyder,** in BBC-1's *Crackerjack* on Friday. And they're in the first of BBC-2's new **Nan Mouskouri** series on Wednesday, along with **Paco Pena.**

Kenny, Smokie and **Ronnie Lane** are the big names in the latest edition of ITV's *Supersonic*, which also includes **Slik,** the outfit hailed as the potential pop sensations of this year. Some regions (including London) see it Saturday, others on Wednesday.

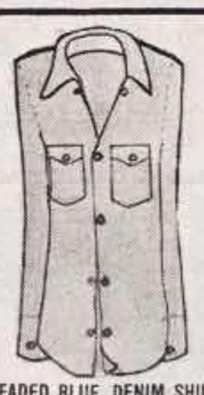
Glyder are showcased in Tyne-Tees' *'The Geordie Scene* which they and HTV screen on Sunday, while various other regions see it on Thursday or Saturday. And **Sailor** are the studio guests in London Weekend's morning *Saturday Scene* show.

Highlight of the week on Radio 1 is Saturday's *In Concert* featuring **Todd Rundgren** and **Uptopia.** Earlier the same day **Martha Reeves** presents her *Top 12* selection, and on Sunday *Insight* tells the story of **The Bee Gees'** career.

Little Feat enthusiasts should tune in to Derek Jewell's *Sounds Interesting* on Radio 3 this Sunday night, when they'll also hear excerpts from **Chris Squire's** solo album "Fish Out Of Water," as well as music from Irish group **Spud.**

Radio Luxembourg's new hour-long *Great Albums* series continues next Wednesday (14) with the **10 c.c.** set "How Dare You?".

—DEREK JOHNSON



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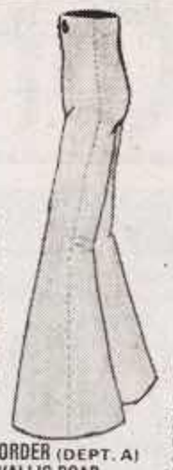

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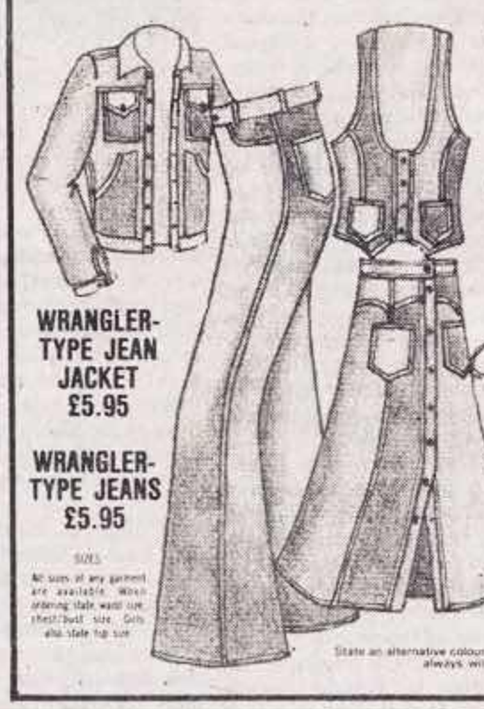

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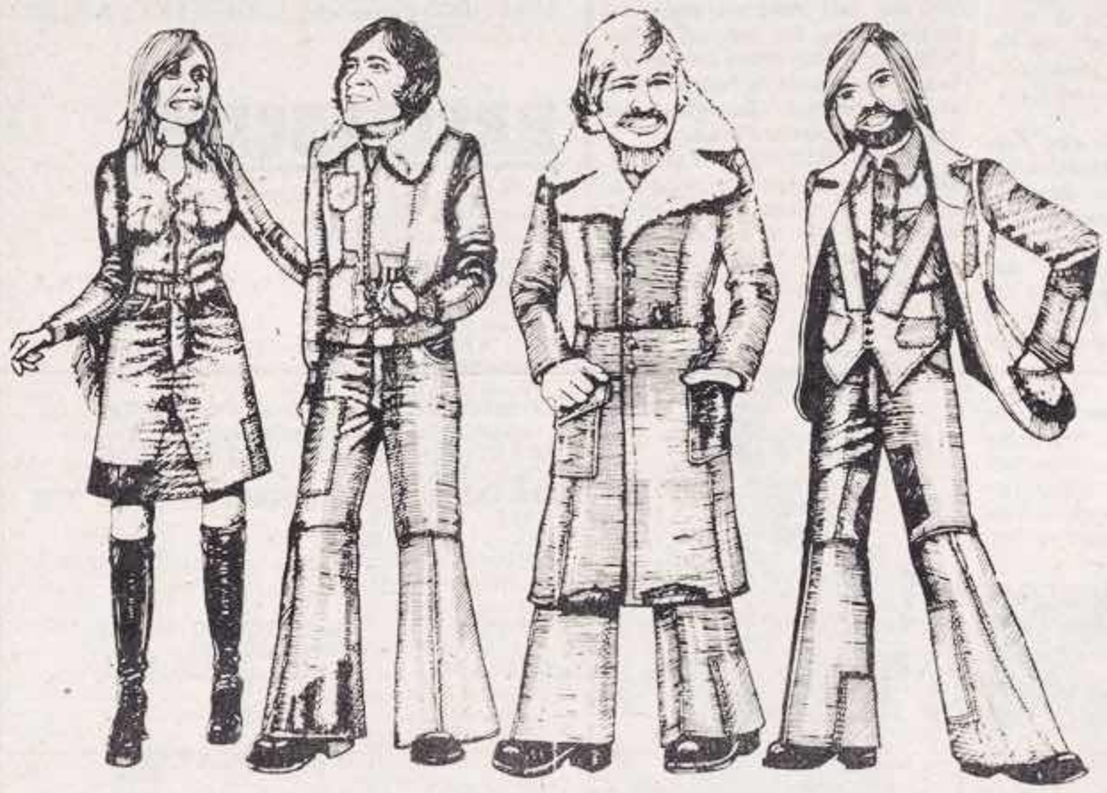

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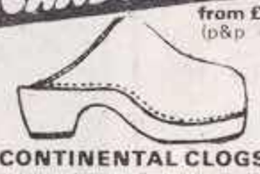

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SOUL

"Who's that on the jukebox?" "Who cares?"

ROGER ST. PIERRE considers what the disco boom has done for soul, and reviews forthcoming action on the soul scene.

SUCH HAS been the impact of the discos of late that today the "sound" has completely usurped the performer. It doesn't matter who's singing as long as that dancing beat is there.

The effects of this have been many and varied. The emphasis of modern soul records has switched from performance to production to such a degree that Tom Moulton — who, in fact, is nothing more than a mixing engineer — is currently being written about as much as the artists on whose records he wields his magic.

Make no mistake about it, Moulton's contribution probably played as big, if not bigger a role in the success of records by the likes of Gloria Gaynor, People's Choice and BT Express as did the efforts of the writers, arrangers and artists involved.

Moulton believes the whole secret of disco success lies in giving the public a sound which builds into a series of controlled and ever mounting peaks, using gimmicks like slowing down or speeding up the tracks which the record's producer gives him for his mixing.

In print it all sounds a bit clinical, smacking of a production line approach and that, indeed, is the most valid criticism of the effect which the current disco boom has had on soul music.

Today there's a positive glut of high velocity dance discs, while the deep soul records over which soul freaks used to go ape have been deprived of exposure and any real chart chance (that is, if they even get as far as being released here).

The concentration on a sound rather than a particular artist's performance began of course with Tamla Motown who used the innovatory Detroit Sound as a master plan which tended to totally obscure the musical personality of individual performers — any one of a dozen of the company's acts could have scored with the backing track they gave Marvin Gaye for "I Heard It Through The Grapevine" for instance.

Much the same can now be said for Philly Sound, the Miami Sound emanating from the TK Studios and the New Jersey Sound of Joe and Sylvia Robinson's All Platinum set-up.

But while all this has tended to push the artist into the background it has helped put the emphasis where it should rightly be — on what the record actually sounds like: "It's what's in the groove that counts."

An artist's individual image counts for less today than ever before — a factor which has had some beneficial effects. In the old days, once an artist started the long and painful slide down from the top nobody wanted to know about him/her any more.

Now, though, any artist, be they has-been or never-was, has an equal chance of logging a hit given that they have the right record and the right promotion and distribution to back it up. Hence the revival of fortune for Don Covay, Dee Clarke, Esther Phillips and many another blast-from-the-past.

This new development has also opened the soul field up for both white Americans and foreign artists. Silver Convention's "Fly Robin Fly" was one of the biggest selling on 1975's disco records — the girls concerned had the right sound and that's all that mattered. So what the hell if they were not only white but German at that!

Thanks to this trend a new objectivity has crept into the whole treatment of soul music, so that even specialist and hitherto totally purist magazines like *Black Music* and *Blues and Soul* now accept anything, provided it is genuine soul music in feel, whatever its source. The same people who derided the superb Righteous Brothers, Timi Yuro and others who dared, as whites, to enter the hallowed kingdom of soul music in the 'sixties now welcome artists like Frankie Valli, the Average White Bad and Silver Convention — just as long as the sound's right.

One reason for the current disco boom must be the economic climate which has cut the profit ratios of club owners and which, when coupled with the increasingly heavy fees demanded by acts for live performance, is leading more and more of them to rely on recorded music which (a) comes cheaper and (b) represents a known quality where groups often fail to live up to their reputations.

London promoter Alan Ray highlights the problems met by those who are still keen on presenting live imported soul acts: "Air fares and hotel costs have risen so much that the potential profit in bringing many acts over has been reduced to such a low level that it isn't worth taking any risks. Most promoters are now tending to go for artists of proven 'in person' stature as far as the UK goes — in other words the perennial visitors, but even these are now tending to price themselves out of the market."

DESPITE ALL THIS there are quite a few soul acts lined up for UK visits in the next month or so and, significantly, most of them have built their reputations via the exposure they've had in the discos, not least that veteran of the dance-beat James Brown, who brings his revue in for a prestigious four date tour starting at the Odeon, Hammersmith on 16 January and following through with the Odeon, Birmingham (17); Empire, Liverpool (18) and California, Dunstable (19).

Coinciding with his visit, Polydor are getting behind the man's new long-windedly titled "Everybody's Doin' The Hustle And Dead On The Double Bump" album (2391 197) which, while still laced with those seemingly interminable but undeniably hypnotic rhythms, comes through with something of a new sound for the self-tagged "Minister Of New New Super Heavy Funk".

That trade-marked wacka-wacka rhythm guitar sound is still in there but the lead guitarist plays some heavy rock licks while the horn players contribute some near-to-jazz solos and girlie back-up vocals make an appearance.

There's more variety than usual with a new reading of "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag" bearing little relationship to the man's 'sixties original while a re-visit to "Superbad" (now "Superbad, Superslick") is now even more insidiously funky that it was first time around.

Donald Byrd has a career which goes back as far as Brown's but it's only been of late, with a subtle switch from bebop to the near-soul funk-jazz of current popularity that he has won recognition beyond the inward-looking coterie of jazz buffs.

From "Black Byrd" on though, the man's been making it with the disco crowd and he'll be touring with his proteges, the Black Byrds with gigs set for the Dome, Brighton (16 January); California, Dunstable (17); Palace, Manchester (18); Burlesque, Farnborough (21); Odeon, Hammersmith (22) and Barbarella's, Birmingham (3 February).

Trammps are due in from from the end of the month through early February, People's Choice, Rufus Thomas and the Sweet Inspiration all come over this month and Chairmen of the Boad kick off a hefty UK tour

WHILE LOTS of people predict its imminent demise, Northern Soul ploughs on and on regardless, though the kind of sounds being played have been up-dated to a point where there's now little difference between what gets programmed in Northern Sounds' outlets and ordinary soul clibs.

On reason is that the well of undiscovered oldie dancers has all but dried up, though one or two companies are still coming up with previously unavailable items in the much derided (or much loved, depending on your viewpoint) stomp-stomp dance idiom of classic Northern Soul.

Operating out of Nottingham as a subsidiary of the Selectadisc record store which has long supplied Northern Soul addicts — DJs and punters alike — with their wants, the Black Magic label understandably manages to keep pretty close to the pulse of just what the punters want, and to hell with any bad reviews *Black Music* and others (including myself) might give them.

Butch Baker's "The Joker" (Black Magic BM111) has long been an in-demand rarity but why I really can't imagine, as it's quite frankly the very height of banality despite its unrestrainedly extrovert approach.

As with so many Northern Sounds, the recording quality isn't exactly of the highest mettle either.

Creation's "I Get The Fever" (Black Magic BM 109) and Cherry People's "And Suddenly" Black Magic BM 112) are both as far removed from real soul music as you can get and, indeed, the vocalists sound to my ears like white pop performers, and not very good ones at that.

but Black Magic records sell healthily, despite lack of exposure outside Northern Soul circles, so someone out there must like them — different strokes for different folks.

Still on the Northern front, some people who sent deposits for the aborted Blackpool Soul Convention claim they still haven't received their refunds which is bad news coming on top of the hard-to-justify last minute cancellation of the event.

Disco darlings of'75: top, Gloria Gaynor with 'Disco Queen' award. Below l. to r., Betty Wright, Shirley Goodman, Rhetta Young.

SOUL CHARTS

US R&B Top Ten

1	(2)	WALK AWAY FROM LOVE	David Ruffin (Motown)
2	(1)	LOVE ROLLERCOASTER	Ohio Players (Mercury)
3	(5)	WAKE UP EVERYBODY	Harold Melvin & The Bluenotes (Phila. Int'l.)
4	(6)	LOVE MACHINE	The Miracles (Tamla)
5	(7)	SING A SONG	Earth, Wind & Fire (Columbia)
6	(3)	I LOVE MUSIC	O'Jays (Phila. Int'l.)
7	(4)	FULL OF FIRE	Al Green (Hi)
8	(11)	LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY	Donna Summer (Oasis)
9	(8)	LET'S DO IT AGAIN	The Staple Singers (Curtom)
10	(10)	DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO (THEME FROM MAHOGANY)	Diana Ross (Motown)

Charts courtesy of "CASHBOX"

DISCO SCENE

All lineage in this section 10p per word

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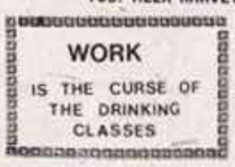

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NME CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Honky soulster — hit man for Island Records! (4, 9)
8 See 6 down
9 Rhymin' Simon in pugilist pose, circa '69 (3, 5)
10 More than one liquor distiller equals Rock and Roll Womaniser! (6)
11 Trumpets, trombones, French horns collectively
13 "Utopia follows wheresoever he treads" — *Patience Strong, 1976* (4, 8)
14 How (anag. 3) *(Just an easy one we threw in there folks!)*
15 Just a mean mutha from Memphis . . . until he discovered Otis Redding *(Now you know you should have taken more notice of last week's headlines)*
16 She paints her own covers too you know!
18 *Bejasus how did Murray get in here?* (Abbrev.)
19 Circa '65, Lennon/McCartney's ode to the joys of British Rail's Away Day (3, 7)
21 & 24 down Freddie & Co in murderous mood
22 Now major British rock label, origins firmly fixed in Jamaican music
25 M. Jerry's moment of glory (2, 3, 10)
28 Ages El, so take it easy!
29 '69 hit for Johnny Nash, originally by 23 down
33 Willowy Princess of American MOR — Elvis should be so lucky to have a weight problem in reverse (5, 9)
35 Made "Shotgun Wedding" soul classic (3, 1)
36 . . . as milk — and you know you can trust the Captain!

DOWN

1 Collaborated (as lyricist) with Jack Bruce on most of Cream's best known numbers (4, 5)
2 Courtesy D. Bowie, Lulu's looloo of a stab at rock credibility (3, 3, 3, 4, 3, 5)
3 16 across wrote the song about it (when she wasn't even there); 10 across was one of those who was there and did sing about it: 14 across were there but didn't sing about it *(Whaddya mean you haven't got 14 across yet?!)*
4 Send model on (anag. 4, 7)
5 One of those pieces wivout world innit!
6 & 8 across Portrait of the Zimmerman as silver-tongued Casanova (3,4,3)
7 Gallagher's partner (Benny, not Rory, that is)
8 & 22 Mud singer
12 *Enfant terrible* of the British airwaves (5, 7)
17 "Runaround Sue" and "The Wanderer" were his biggest pop hits
20 Heavyweight manager of L. Zeppelin (5, 5)
21 & 27 Bristol-born jazz pianist/composer, married to Julie Driscoll
23 & 30 Soul innovator, he'd sold 15 million records when he died 1964 in motel shooting incident
24 See 21 across
26 '72 Alice hit
27 See 21 down
30 See 23
31 Along with Bluebeat, one of early specialities of 22 across
32 See 8 down
34 Label

ANSWERS

ACROSS: 2 Bob Dylan; 8 Bob Hite; 9 "Band On The Run"; 10 Alto; 11 Allan Clarke; 13 Stones; 15 Rod Stewart; 16 Brilleaux; 17 Swan Song; 21 "Gimme Shelter"; 23 T. Rex; 24 "I'm A Clown"; 26 Dolly Parton; 28 (Elvis) Presley; 30 "Odds'n'Sods"; 31 Ono; 32 Jesse Colin Young; 33 Lee (Brilleaux). **DOWN:** 1 Bob Harris; 2 Bangla Desh; 3 Don McLean; 4 Aces; 5 Don Van Vliet; 6 Status Quo; 7 Tubes; 10 Al Stewart; 12 Alan Osmond; 14 Turles; 18 "Angel Clare"; 19 Gospel; 20 Jim Croce; 22 "Lean On Me"; 25 Hardin; 27 "Lenny"; 29 Yoko (Ono).

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PLAYING IN THE BAND

DURING THE festive season I battered the middle finger of my left hand with a hammer while nailing a sprig of holly to the front of my SG. This has meant no playing. So I haven't yet been able to get into my favourite present — which is Stefan Grossman's *How To Play Ragtime Guitar*.

I'd like to recommend Grossman's guitar tutors. They're excellent for fingerpickers trying to improve their technique and for any guitarist who fancies ploughing through the tablature. His earlier blues tutor did a lot for my playing — bringing on both left and right hand.

All of Grossman's tutors come in record form with the booklet of tablature thrown in. They are easy to follow. He always includes a full explanation of tablature, which for my money is not as good as proper dots, but many prefer it and it is an older form of notation.

His tutors are, however, advanced. The mastery of a few chords and a little picking technique will not prove sufficient to get you through them.

On the other hand, anyone who struggled through the deliberate mistakes in the *NME Guitar Book* and survived is right in there with a chance!

The ragtime tutor, on which he has collaborated with Ton Van Bergeyk, is his toughest yet. There are pieces that appear impossible when you first tackle them.

My system for such horrors is as follows. You learn them bar at a time and section by section. Learn the first bar, then the second bar. Then play those two bars together and learn the third bar. Then play all three and learn the fourth and so on.

Eventually you find you've repeated the first few bars so many times that they're permanently fixed in your fingers.

I'll grant that, even after learning an entire piece, there are still sections that always seem to have to be approached at half speed. The only way to overcome these is to practice them alone a number of times, always taking a bar run at them.

Play them at a speed you can manage at first, and then repeat slightly faster.

Never attempt to speed up while you are playing. It ruins your sense of rhythm.

Grossman comes from the American school of ragtime and blues playing and consequently his technique tends to be a little dirty at times. The European players are much cleaner in their approach.

For instance, Marcel Dadi's playing lacks some of the excitement of Grossman's, but his technique is more polished.

Dadi is French and he also has a couple of albums out: *La Guitare A Dadi* and *Dadi's Folks*, both of which include books of tablature. The language of music being international, the tablature requires no translation.

Whereas Grossman's tutors comprise many fairly well known pieces extracted from the playing of Rev Garry Davis and Blind Blake, Dadi's pieces are mainly his own compositions — but nevertheless pleasant and worth working through.

Once you've got that lot tucked under your belt you'll be ready to tackle some of the things on John James latest album, "Head In The Clouds", which I also thoroughly recommend for this sort of playing. James is possibly the best of the three but unfortunately he has not yet produced a tutor.

Incidentally, both Dadi and James appear on Transatlantic. Grossman is on XTRA — also a Transatlantic label, so that record company deserves a pat on the press.

I HAVE been waiting with pick at the ready for some time now for volume two of *Teach Yourself Rock Guitar* by Charlie Daniels.

STEFAN GROSSMAN: demonstration album and booklet of tablature on ragtime.

New guitar tutors for rock 'n' ragtime

But you gotta be fairly hot stuff before you even start . . . ***REX ANDERSON*** *reviews some advanced tuition from* ***STEFAN GROSSMAN, MARCEL DADI*** *and* ***CHARLIE DANIELS.***

Volume One, which is available now, was promising but I found there was rather too much chat and not enough playing. Nevertheless, it is the first really effective beginner's course for rock guitar on record that I have encountered.

The Dadi and Grossman albums, incidentally, are entirely playing. They are pleasant records in their own right. And they have been good enough to throw in the tablature.

There is not yet a rock guitar tutor that does this. Presumably rock guitarists are not particularly keen to reveal that the secrets of their technique are all down to echoplexes and endless sustain and distortion.

However, the Daniels tutor goes part way to satisfying this need, and that's why I look forward to Volume Two, which should be available early in the new year.

Daniels is a respected US session musician, and on Volume One it sounds like he just sat down in a studio somewhere and gave a lecture on guitar playing, saying the first things that came into his head.

In fact, that's exactly what he did do.

He's very impressive, but for an absolute beginner it's often a little difficult to follow. His tips are sound though, and he manages to get a lot of difficult points across with his technique of talking and playing.

The major criticism is the inadequate pamphlet that comes with the record because it leaves the learner reliant upon his ears to pick put out some of the licks and scales that are demonstrated.

Of course, lead lines and licks in rock guitar are the most difficult things to teach. Anyone can write out a string of notes, but it is the interpretation of those notes and the techniques used in putting expression into them that make the thing into a solo.

Daniels manages to get across some of this feel for interpretation and for rhythm and expression.

From my own experience of teaching guitar, the first few lessons are always bound to be full of boring stuff — about tuning, and movable chords and the right way and wrong way to approach learning.

With a tutor, whether it be a book or a record, these areas have to be covered thoroughly because the teacher never gets to meet his pupils, and they can't say, "I didn't understand that, can you explain it again."

Hopefully though, Daniels has got this all out of his system and Volume Two will really get down to the nitty gritty of playing the thing. I'm waiting with interest to see whether he'll tackle the problem of building up speed to play fast runs — which is something I've never been able to get across in words or diagrams.

Incidentally, a Volume Three is promised for around the middle of the year.

Poodle locks and lollipops — the New Nostalgia *Pic: JOE STEVENS*

Wotch'oo mean, Last Year's Thing?

GASBAG gets her comeuppance from P. Johnson of Liverpool and his dog Spot. THEY wrote to Gasbag, 128 Long Acre, WC2E 9QH. But we don't want any more of you trying THAT.

I WANT to complain about Gasbag. I want to complain about the bizarre contradiction which we see every week. To be exact, the phenomenon of absurdly long letters about music, which is supposed to be simple and close to its maker's heart.

These letters read like a reggae article or a Singles page by Ian MacDonald (whose swift progress from being an interesting and amusing writer to being a boring old creep is really amazing). Chris Rojek was probably right when he called Neil Foxlee an aspiring cub reporter. In fact all the letters in Gasbag look as if they're from aspiring cub reporters. Except for the funny ones.

Right just this minute I have been hit by the solution. Here it is.

ONE. *All* album reviews should be the same length. Page-long album reviews must be banished to the outer darkness where they belong. This is because they lead to boredom and rage.

If your writers had to write about stuff like "Blood On The Tracks" in seven inches of column, they'd have to cut out all this pretension! They'd also have to write more about albums they usually dismiss. All singles reviews should receive similar treatment, but without that loathsome technique of running all the reviews together.

TWO. Interviews should all consist of questions and answers, the best way of making them purely the artist's thoughts. No interview should go on for longer than one page. Not even Dylan or Lennon. In fact, one page should be the length of someone special.

THREE. You should not go into spasms of collective raving about anyone who has not produced some kind of recorded eveidence of their ability. It is useless to rave about someone we cannot judge.

FOUR. The news pages should be merely news, written in a suitably factual way. Likewise retrospective articles on various artists' careers. The title "Lookin' Back" should be dropped because it is too reminiscent of the style which needs to be abolished.

I think that is everything.

The effects would be obvious. The irritating techniques your writers enjoy using would be instantly curtailed. The readers, whose letters are like your articles, would write in the new style. Before you start yelling "Victor Jara, Brian Wilson, Jim Morrison, Syd Barrett" I must point out that this does not mean the loss of the NME wit or seriousness. It just means you'd have to be funny or serious in a less offensive manner.

Come to think, who needs those famed pieces anyway? The Barrett one could have been cut to a page, and the other three edited out of existence. (Especially the Jara piece.)

I regret the length of this letter, but it is necessary. As I write it, I hope it will be a sort of big explosion that gets rid of all the others. It almost certainly won't be. Most likely you will append some bland reply if you print it at all. Most likely you will go on waiting for your precious rock saviour while you ignore one method that could produce him. You will have your little raves — Marley, Lofgren, Springsteen — which will pass. *Sounds* has already lost its individual style in attempting to be more like you. *Melody Maker* will follow eventually, considering that this current situation could go on for *years*.

How did such a set of clods come to be the staff of the most influential music paper? — **P. JOHNSON, Norris Green, Liverpool.**

● **Just lucky I guess.**

MUCH HAS been written in the popular press concerning groups of musicians who damage — and in some cases destroy — hotel rooms and even their own equipment.

I would just like to point out that not all contemporary musicians act in this manner — in fact my band "The Fabulous Poodles" try to make a habit of decorating and generally improving the state of hotel rooms we visit.

We always pack a few tins of 'Magicote' and a couple of sturdy brushes when we 'hit-the-road', and another common practice for us is to *repair* our amplifiers on stage; this has since become a high spot of our act.

Should we be accosted by any of the breed known as 'groupies', we politely show them the error of their ways, and sometimes offer them money to purchase sweeties.

We sport sensible haircuts and bow-ties, and I just hope our behaviour will act as an example to other more illustrious combos. — **ANTHONY DE MEUR, Finchley, London.**

Edited this week by KATE PHILLIPS and ROVER

I FEEL IT is only fair to inform you of a new and strange trend about to engulf the rock world. I will go as far as to predict that by the midddle of next year the vast majority of 'serious' rock fans will be *overweight*.

Yes-sir, because 'Gourmet Rock' is coming.

Already we have had signs i.e. — "Careful With That Meatpie You Queen" and "Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Larder", and who could forget the recent hit, "No Woman, No Pie?" And is the world ready for the 25-stone, bad-breathed, beer-besotted, bohemian, bi-sexual backgammon player Bert Carnidge!!??

Your in wonder — **CHARLES BAWDYLEER.**

PLEASE TELL me, for I would like to know, exactly how insulting rock journalists can be to the very visage of a God Himself? I mean one in The Public Eye, one of those who is put away in a satin-lined box after performing (they are, aren't they?) Whether it be on stage, at a Press conference or at a soignee gathering, where he has his exclusive photograph taken in a Very Important Huddle.

What I mean is, if you were interviewing someone whom you discover to get up your very 'umble nose, sir, say, for instance, R. Blackmore; would you, could you (if you were so inclined) tell him afterwards that you thought he was a nasty, peevish, self-possessed, arrogant and above all not nice V.I.P., although a V.I.P.? Or would it be in his divine power to thus strike thee down, thrust thee into eternity, or simply turn thee into a loathsome reptile? I merely muse, but which? — **HERMIONE CRESCENT-WEATHER, Farnborough, Hampshire.**

NOBODY CALLS The 'Oo amateurs Mr. Newton, nobody. Not even The 'Oo call the 'Oo amateurs Mr. Newton. The 'Oo are perfect Mr. Newton. Do not blaspheme any more Mr. Newton. Tell the boys you were joshin' Mr. Newton. Go on Mr. Newton, apologise ... **EVIL ROY SLADE** alias **EVIL JOHN FERGUSON.**

HAVING READ Mr. O'Pelican's letter concerning French musical taste I immediately ate three French records by Lindberg, Triangle and Gerard Manset, but they didn't taste any different from British records to me. — **PETER McDRONGO, London N4.**

PREDICTIONS for 1976.

March . . . NME devoted in its entirety for 4 weeks to "the future of rock 'n' roll" and posing intriguing questions such as "where is rock *really* going?"

June . . . Rod Stewart records "I Got You Under My Skin", says "call me Frank", but later claims "that's show business".

August . . . Derek Jewell mentions in passing that he never did like rock 'n' roll music anyway.

September . . . NME announces officially that "it is now hip to like the Bay City Rollers".

Nothing else interesting will happen. — **A CLEANER SHAVE, Shoreham, Sussex.**

I LIKE wearing velvet underwear because I find that the nerve-scorching feedback makes "one of rock's most uncompromising recordings". I think reggae music is jolly boring. — **VENUS IN FURS, West Lane, East Grinstead, Surrey.**

GEORG KAJANUS of Sailor *must* be a v. clever kiddy. Either your pics (hi there, pic-people) are the wrong way round *or* Georg is an ambidextrous guitar player. I suspect both. — **THE EARLY CHRISTIAN PLASTIC KNEE SUCKER, NorCat, King's Lynn, Transylvania.**

I THOUGHT Wan'king was a place in China until I read NME. — **HARVESTER OF EYES, Molesey, Surrey.**

OK PIGS!

This is a serious letter. I know you're hoping it's unsigned and with no address so you don't have to cough out an album token. But it is. And you do. — **A. PUNK, Wingfield, Rotherham, S. Yorks.**

● **But we won't. So there. Now what? Eh?**

A LETTER FROM ENO

Dear Miles,

Thank you for reviewing the Obscure albums, and I'm happy that you found some of the material interesting.

I think that it is a pity that you seem to have fallen victim to the NME policy of cynicism replacing criticism. I would like to tell you a few things about myself and the label which might help you to understand why I was rather depressed by what you wrote.

First off, the label was no Christmas present. I first broached the subject with Island two years ago. Secondly, I am not 'wilfully Obscure' — but I do think that there is a great deal of music outside the orthodox retailing channels (which may well be described as Obscure simply because it is never heard) which deserves some attention. If the name of the label distresses you, I am sorry. It took me two months to finally decide on that name, and I chose it because it seemed honest; you must think of the name in terms of the kind of material Island are used to releasing.

When I was at Winchester Art School, I had a little bookstall which sold publications like those by Openings press and Plakat Press. I also handled a magazine called IT, which was then in its very earliest days. At that time too, I was told that I was being deliberately and wilfully obscure . . .

Last point: what do you think *I* am in it for? You write as though you suspect me of some kind of involved publicity stunt, or perhaps a way of squeezing a little cash out of another market. You might like to know that I expect to earn between £20 and £50 per album, and for this I not only produce them; I also designed the covers, paid all the bills and kept all the accounts (including VAT invoices, which are a pain in the ass). The operation is entirely one-man; what I present Island with is a complete and finished pressing. I don't do this out of a sense of altruism, but because I want to make a bridge between certain musical ideas that *I* can make use of. I also want to be in a position where I attract new ideas into my living room, but this is based upon a reluctance to go out if it can possibly be avoided. So far, this is working — I receive about 20 demo tapes a week.

One more last point: please don't fall victim to the NME habit of erecting this (entirely illusory) distinction between "upmarket" and "down(?) market". The need to glamourise the working classes and "the kids" is an entirely middle-class trait based on the erroneous assumption that there are certain intrinsic human values which are still epitomised there and nowhere else. It simply is not like that. Having come from an entirely working-class background and been educated in a middle-class school, I find no reasons to glamourise or denigrate one in favour of the other. I think that there are very few villains or heroes in real life, and I am pissed off with NME's continual and paranoiac attempts to locate them.

Yours sincerely

Brian Eno

Dear Eno,

I'm surprised that you were depressed by my review. There is a tendency in the music press to ignore anything which is a little bit difficult or else turn it into a joke. Even though your records were presented as "Obscure" (the implication of the name of the label) I tried to review them as if they were another new release and as if the listener didn't need an enormous background knowledge of avant-garde music in order to understand them.

I know what you mean about being accused of wilful obscurity. I too had a bookshop which sold John Furnival's "Openings Press" books and it was from there that we actually published IT in its earliest days.

I agree completely with your last point so I don't need to answer that.

One thing you missed, the records are available from Island Records, Horton Road, West Drayton, Middx. We made a typo in the address.

Miles

Slightly ruff-ruffled.

OBITUARY

Mal Evans pictured recently with Denny Laine of Wings and George Harrison.

40-YEAR-OLD Mal Evans, ex-Beatle road manager, was shot dead by Los Angeles police in the early hours of Monday morning.

Events leading to his death are still uncertain.

It seems that two L.A. patrolmen arrived at the house of Evans' girlfriend, Mrs. Francis Hughes, following a telephone complaint. She informed them that a somewhat distraught Evans — armed with a loaded rifle — had grabbed her 4-year-old daughter and gone into the bedroom. When Evans refused to surrender the rifle, he was shot six times.

Those who knew Evans personally find his actions inexplicable.

Mrs. Hughes later told police that Evans had been very depressed of late, and had talked wildly of suicide; at the time of his death he had been writing a book about his association with The Beatles. He was also an honorary Sheriff of Los Angeles County, though few knew that.

Mal Evans, once officially designated top Beatle attache and road manager, was just a shade to the right of Neil Aspinall in the Beatle/Apple hierarchy. He had first met the group when he was employed as a bouncer at the Cavern Club in Liverpool, his home town, having previously worked for 11 years as a telecommunications engineer.

In the summer of 1963 the late Brian Epstein — the Beatles' manager — offered Evans the job of assistant roadie, and he worked for them from then on.

He was engaged in numerous production activities (records and films) at Apple, and following the break-up of The Beatles helped members of the group in their various individual activities. Like them, he commuted regularly from England to America.

He helped Lennon arrange the Plastic Ono Band gig at Toronto in 1969; and he was co-credited, with Harrison, with writing a song on the "Ringo" album, "You And Me (Babe)".

Tony Bramwell, who worked on Beatle tours with Evans and later became record plugger for Apple, said: "As far as I'm concerned, Mal will always be the jolly green giant".

Derek Taylor, former Beatle press officer and now managing director of Warner Bros. Records, said: "This whole incident is so uncharacteristic because Mal was a man of extreme passivity; perhaps more Sunbury-on-Thames and less Sunset Strip would have helped".

TEAZERS

ON THE EVE of his massive 35-city US comeback tour, once again, if American rumours are to be believed, **David Bowie's** business affairs are in a state of disarray.

Close followers of these columns will recall that after Bowie divested himself of **Tony DeFries'** MainMan organisation (resulting in an eight-month legal hassle ultimately settled out of court), Mrs Jones' absent son hitched himself up with one **Michael Lippman,** an American agent/lawyer.

Lippman, Bowie's attorney during the DeFries proceedings, described his duties as representative and business associate. Only last week he was telling *Billboard:* "I prefer not to be called David's manager. He has too good a grip on his own career to need a manager at this point." Lippman is rumoured to have recently bought a large house in Beverly Hills.

What all this leads up to is that Bowie, plus entourage including spouse Angela, child Zowie, PR Pat Gibbons, nanny and housekeeper, recently left Los Angeles en route (he doesn't fly, remember) for Jamaica where he intended to rehearse for the US tour.

The trip, however, turned out to be little short of disastrous, with Bowie well and truly pained by the lack of arrangements (no record company rep to meet them etc.) for the party when they arrived in New Orleans. Whether or not Lippman's duties included such functions, the story is that David piqued, got on the phone to L.A. and intimated that he would no longer require Michael Lippman's services.

According to our sources, Pat Gibbons now takes over, temporarily, the day-to-day management of Bewley Brothers Co., the company Bowie and Lippman set up to handle the star's affairs.

Further guff on David (you'll find his new album reviewed on page 15): that when the American tour ends late March he'll set off by boat to Cannes for European dates culminating with the previously reported gigs in May at Wembley, that according to *Billboard,* he is also producing an album by "Diamond Dogs" tour lead guitarist **Earl Slick** . . .

News from Olympia: **Status Quo** and both **Bad Company** sold out . . . **Small Faces** reunion odds narrow: after both **Steve Marriott** and **Ronnie Lane** included S. Faces numbers in their sets, **Kenny Jones** spotted having tete a tete with Mr. Lane . . . also backstage together: Slade's **Don Powell** and Queen's **Brian May** . . . Additional lighting and sound dampening drapes put up only for last two days — i.e. the **Bad Company** dates . . . **Thin Lizzy,** now the best of friends again, begin work on new album at end of month . . .

I'll be damned, here comes your ghost again: seems **Joan Baez's** "Diamonds And Rust" album, the title-track of which was about her liason of ten years back with **Bob Dylan** did more than just revive memories; after Rolling Thunder tour things seem to be on again for Joan and Bobby — rust to diamonds? . . . And we have news of the next **Stones** and **Zeppelin** albums. The title of the Stones' album is more than likely to be "Hot Stuff" — is that really the best they can do? — and tracks include "Cherry Oh Baby", "Memory Motel", and "Melody"; expect release in February . . . the Zeppelin album will also be released at the beginning of next month; both the sleeve design and the music are said to be simple and straightforward; it's been completed more quickly than any of their albums since "Led Zep I".

You've heard of **Pete Townshend's** brother and **David Bowie's** mum, but are you ready for **Elton John's** cousin? The gent, name of **Roy Dwight,** showed up on "Match of The Day" last Saturday, when ever-smiling ever-bearded **Jimmy Hill** introduced him as manager of Tooting and Mitcham, only surviving non-league club in the FA Cup. Dwight, one time Cup finalist himself (1959, Notts Forest), did have a passing pudgy resemblance to the Elt, as well as a hefty pair of Buddy Holly specs, and revealed that the Elt was once his page boy . . . Talking of glasses, seems that Budgie's **Burke Shelley** swaps his seventies style 'aviator' frames for a pair of black plastic "Buddy Hollys" off stage . . .

At the Desert Inn, Las Vegas, **Elvis Presley** hiding behind rhinestone sunglasses and a shoulder-length blonde wig . . . **Alan Hull** no longer with Warners; all offers considered . . . Here's a companion for the at-one-time Richard Thompson - almost - joined **Eagles** story; at one time Ian **Matthews** almost joined **Steely Dan;** jeez, those Fairport boys coulda made good livings . . .

Erstwhile **CSN&Y** drummer **Dallas Taylor** seeking 50,000 dollars damages from **Stephen Stills** in lawsuit over alleged contract between pair in 1971 . . . Five stitches in head for **Nils Lofgren** after he collided with his own guitar during gig in L.A. . . .

Neil Young and **Stephen Stills** definitely doing an album together for Atlantic . . .

Scooped: according to *Sounds,* **Marc Bolan** — remember him? — releases his next album on February 30. Think about it . . .

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